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EWALD FLÜGEL, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH PHILOLOGY IN BERLIN

STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

Bodleian Library, including lines 1-64 of *The Owl and the Nightingale*

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE

EDITED BY

JOHN EDWIN WELLS, A.M., M.L.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN
HIRAM COLLEGE

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PREFACE

The Owl and the Nightingale has apparently received much less attention than it merits. Probably this is due in great part to the lack of an accurate and convenient edition of the poem. The editions of Stevenson, Wright, and Stratmann are incomplete, and none of the three has at all adequate apparatus (cf. Bibliography). Wright's bare Cotton text may be had in the Percy Society Publications in larger libraries; but because only a few were printed for a limited circulation, copies of Stevenson's and Stratmann's editions are rare even among collections of hundreds of thousands of volumes. Accordingly many students have been forced to rely to a great extent for their estimate of the poem, on the selections in Mätzner's *Altenglische Sprachproben* (a work not generally accessible) and in Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, Part I.

In this edition for the first time the full readings of both MSS. are printed. Great pains have been taken in an attempt to make the texts accurate. Explanations of the bases and methods used in making up the texts and the glossary, will be found prefaced to the texts and the glossary. To save space and to satisfy the purpose of this series, the notes have been confined to explanation of the texts, illustrative parallels being omitted. The use of diacritical marks in the glossary and not in the texts; and the limiting of citations from the text and the omission of etymological matter, in the glossary; are by direction of the general editor. The more or less "impressionistic" character of the remarks in parts of the section on the author, may be somewhat justified (if need be) by a hope to arouse pos-

Preface

sibly closer study of a work that seems as yet to have been really but hastily judged.

I wish to thank Mr. J. P. Gilson and Mrs. A. F. Parker New for my obligations to them indicated at the head of the texts. I am very grateful for the kindness of Professor Frederick M. Padelford of the University of Washington, who collated my final "copy" for the Cotton text with the Cotton MS.

To Professor O. F. Emerson of Western Reserve University and to Professor Richard Jones of Vanderbilt University, I owe especial thanks for their kind concern toward the publication of this edition. To the general editor of the series, Professor Ewald Flügel, I am most deeply obliged for the admission of the poem into the series, for his careful reading of my MS., and for his very helpful suggestions. I would thank him, too, for making for me at the Bodleian and at the British Museum a number of notes concerning the MSS.

Finally, I would indicate my appreciation of the courtesies extended to me by Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, Librarian of the Bodleian, and by the authorities of the Department of MSS. of the British Museum, and by those of the libraries of Columbia, Harvard, and Western Reserve Universities, and of the University of Pennsylvania.

It is with pride and sorrow that I venture to associate with this volume the name of the teacher who suggested the undertaking of it, the late Professor Thomas Randolph Price of Columbia University.

JOHN EDWIN WELLS.

Hiram, Ohio, June, 1906.

Introduction

I. THE MANUSCRIPTS.

Two Middle English MSS. preserve *The Owl and the Nightingale*. The earlier of these (in this edition referred to as C) is contained in MS. Cotton Caligula A IX. in the British Museum. The character of the handwriting and the peculiarities of the MS. at large, have led to a general agreement that the part of the MS. in which *The Owl* is found is of the earlier half of the thirteenth century.¹

The older version of Lazamon's *Brut* (originally separate from this volume) occupies now ff. 3-194 of the MS. Then follow, f. 195 *La Vie de St. Josaphaz*, in French verse, by Chardry; f. 216 v *La Vie des set Dormanz*, also in French verse, by Chardry; f. 229 v a chronicle in French prose, extending from the Saxon Conquest to Henry III., ending, "Apres la mort cestu rei Johan, si regna sun fiz Henri." *The Owl and the Nightingale* extends in double columns (each usually of 34 lines), without title or colophon, from f. 233 r to f. 246 r. There succeed, ff. 246-49, seven short poems²

¹ Stratmann, Preface to edit. of 1868; Morris, *Old English Miscellany*, p. x.; *et al.* — Madden, Preface to Lazamon, p. xxxv., expressed the opinion that the MS. was written "probably at the close of Henry the Third's reign." He seems not to be supported by the other experts who have studied the MS. itself.

² *Long Life* f. 246; *Orisun of Ure Lady* f. 246 v; *Will and Wit* f. 246 v; *Doomsday* f. 246 v; *Death* f. 247; *Ten Abuses* f. 248 v; *A Lutel Soth Sermun* f. 248 v.

in English, printed by Morris in his *Old English Miscellany*; and the MS. closes, ff. 249-61, with an *estриф* or *débat*, *Le Petit Plet*, in French verse, by Chardry.¹ Folios 233r-249 end of col. 1, are in one handwriting, which apparently does not occur elsewhere in the MS. There is invariably a point at the end of the line. The initial of each paragraph is in red ink.

If other evidence were lacking, the number and the character of the corrections (as a rule not in the original hand) necessitated in the MS. (cf. MS. Var. at foot of text), would indicate that this MS. of *The Owl* is not the original. Proof of this is found in the omission of ll. 86, 770, 771; in the lacunae in 1225, 1254; in the scribe's mistake of *An o* for *To* in 1476, 1489, and of *ᚷ honge* for *an honge* in 1195; in the insertion of *segge* in 1024; in the miscopying of *wiste* in 115 for another word, of *3if* for *wif* in 1469, and of *sortes* for *sottes* in 1471; etc.

It is interesting to note that first occurs at l. 902 the diphthong *eo*; in the same line, the contraction for *bat*, *ber*; in 907, *ea*; in 911, *ð* (cf. Note 911); in 932, *hzw* for the usual *w*; in 910, 919, *a'* for *an* or *and* (only cases in *Owl*); in 904 (except in a few scattered cases), *h* for *3*. Most of these, except *hzw* for *w*, occur with very slight lapses up to 962. Thence for some 220 lines the earlier forms occur regularly. At 1182, *h* for *3* first appears again; at 1184, *ð* and abbreviation for *bat* re-appear; at 1195, is found *hzw*; at 1194, *eo*; at 1216, *ea*;—to continue throughout the rest of the poem, (except *ea*) often much predominating over

¹ Ed. John Koch, *Chardry's Josaphatz*, etc. Heilbronn, 1879.

the forms that occur in ll. 1-902 and ll. 962-1181. — From this one would at first conclude that the MS. had two copyists. But one handwriting seems to continue throughout the poem. There is left, then, the conjecture that this MS. was copied from one in which two hands occurred. It is unlikely that the author would use the two spellings. It is, therefore, very improbable that the MS. from which the Cotton MS. was copied was the author's MS.; and it would seem that the Cotton MS. is *a copy of a copy*, — a fact of much importance if one endeavor to assign a definite date to the composition of the poem.¹ One may suggest that the second hypothetical MS. back of MS. Cotton, is not necessarily the author's MS., and may be a copy.

Some of the characters in C are often to be made out only with difficulty. The division of words in this MS. is often doubtful. *Wen* is frequently not dotted (cf. Note 48), and so is not to be distinguished (as far as form goes) from *thorn*. *Wen* usually occurs for *w*. *Wen* dotted is very like *y* (cf. Note 57). *Thorn* is sometimes dotted (cf. Note 2), and so is like *wen*. *Thorn* is sometimes like *p* (cf. Note 57). *ð* is identical in form with the contraction for *der*. The contractions for *þat* and *þer* are alike.

The later copy of *The Owl and the Nightingale* (in this edition referred to as J) is preserved in MS. Jesus

¹ Cp. the similarity of occurrences of the contraction for *þat* and *þer* in MS. Jes. Coll. to those in MS. Cott. See page xvi. — The notion that MS. Cott. is a copy of a copy is borne out by all citations made later to show that MSS. Cott. and Jes. Coll. are copied from the same original: cf. especially Notes 1388, 1711, with references. See also discussion of Date, page xix; and page xv, (4).

College 29, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The parts of the MS. with which the student of *The Owl* is concerned, are regarded as dating from the latter half of the thirteenth century.¹ From f. 217 r to the end of the MS. there seems to be but one handwriting, with only such variations as change of ink or pen or difference in day or hour of writing might cause. Ff. 217 r top–228 r top contain a poem known as *The Passion of Our Lord*.² The rest of f. 228 r and all of f. 228 v are blank except for later scribbings. *The Owl and the Nightingale* begins f. 229 r top, *Incipit altercacio inter flomenam & Bubonem* (in red), and extends in double columns (of from 32 to 36, usually 34, lines each), with red and blue paragraph initials, and a dot at the end of each line, to the second quarter of the second column f. 241 v, *Explicit*.³ Thereafter follow the poems printed by Morris in his *Old English Miscellany*, pp. 58 etc. The Roman numbers in the following statement of contents refer to Morris's arrangement in his volume, where the poems may be had: II. ff. 242 r–247 v; III. ff. 248 r top–251 v top; IV. ff. 251 v near top–252 v middle; V. f. 252 v middle; XX. ff. 252 v bottom–253 v near top; first 31 ll., a fragment, of XXI., f. 253 v to bottom; last 7 ll. of XI., f. 254 r top; VI. f. 254 r–

¹ Stratmann, Preface to edit. of 1868; Morris, *O. E. Misc.*, p. x.; note in Bodleian copy of Coxe's Catalogue of 1852 against description of MS.; statement of opinion of Bodley's Librarian, Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, to the editor; *et al.*

² Morris, *O. E. Misc.*, pp. 37–57.

³ The leaves have two numberings, one in ink, and one in pencil. Coxe's Cat. of 1852 gives the leaf on which the poem begins as 156. The poem really begins on f. 156. The leaf is numbered 229 also. The numbering of Stratmann's edition, and that of Morris's text of the shorter poems of the MS., have led to the adoption of the numbering in this edition. Thus confusion may be avoided.

254 v top; VII. ff. 254 v near top-255 r top; XXII. f. 255 r near top-255 v middle; XXIII. ff. 255 v-257 v near bottom; XXIV. f. 257 v to bottom; XXV. f. 258 r top-258 v middle; VIII. f. 258 v at middle; IX. ff. 258 v bottom-260 r above middle; X. ff. 260 r-261 v near bottom; first 11 ll. of XI., f. 261 v to bottom; XII. fragment, last 2 ll. of a stanza, and a whole final stanza with 'Amen,' f. 262 r top; XIII. f. 262 r below top; XIV. f. 262 r to about middle; XV. ff. 262 r middle-265 r top; XVI. ff. 265 r-266 r top; XVII. ff. 266 r near top-267 r top; XVIII. ff. 267 r near top-268 r top; short piece not in *O. E. Misc.*, f. 268 r middle; rest of f. 268 r blank; ff. 268 v top-271 r col. 2, *Ici comence de Tobye* (ed. Fr. Michel, *Libri Psalmorum*, pp. 364 et seq.); XIX ff. 271 r col. 2-273 v col. 1 near bottom. Next follow four French pieces: ff. 274 r top-280 r bottom, *Ici commence le Doctrinal*; ff. 280 v top col. 1-295 v col. 1 near bottom, *Ici comence la vie de Set Dormanz*; ff. 296 r top col. 1-317 r bottom col. 1, *Ici comence la vie Seynt Josaphaz*; ff. 317 v top col. 1-330 v middle col. 2, *Ici cumence le petyt ple*. It is to be noticed that among these compositions are later versions of six of the seven short English poems that follow *The Owl* in C (*O. E. Misc.* XXVI. is not in J). There are also in J the three poems of Chardry found in C.

It is of importance to observe that f. 253 v contains a fragment (*O. E. Misc.* XXI.) which ends abruptly at the bottom of the page. The next page (f. 254 r) begins with the last 7 ll. of a poem (*O. E. Misc.* XI.) whose first 11 ll. extend from below the middle to the

bottom of f. 261 v. Between f. 254 r and f. 257 v the poems overlap from page to page, so that no transposition of leaves can have occurred here. But *O. E. Misc.* XXIV. ends at the bottom of f. 257 v. At f. 258 r top a poem begins, and thence to f. 261 v poems overlap from page to page. Hence it may be that a mistake was made in binding up the sheets, and that ff. 254 r-257 v and ff. 258 r-261 v should be transposed. Then one would have the defective fragment (*O. E. Misc.* XXI.) ending abruptly at the bottom of f. 253 v; then ff. 258 r-261 v, ff. 254 r-257 v, making an unbroken progression of poems for eight leaves, overlapping from page to page, but with a gap in XI. between the beginning on f. 261 v and the end on f. 254 r; then, after ff. 254 r-257 v, would follow ff. 262 r *et seq.*, at the top of f. 262 r the fragment of the end of a poem; then a series of poems overlapping from page to page up to f. 268 r. From this it would seem that there must be lost from J or its original a leaf or some leaves immediately after f. 253 v, and f. 261 v, and immediately before f. 262 r. Koch has noted in his edition of Chardry's poems¹ three gaps in the J versions of *Josaphaz* and *Le Petit Plet* due to loss of leaves. This loss in the French parts of the MS. supports the idea of losses at the places noted above. A former owner of the MS. (see page xxvii) found an interesting conclusion of a poem on a "broken leaf" now lost. Can one of the

¹ p. vii.: Heilbronn, 1879. Inside the cover of the MS. is written: "Comparing the three last pieces of this MS. with a copy of the MS. *Caligula A IX.* Brit. Mus., I found that between fol. 228 and 229, 232 and 233, 247 and 248, every time one leaf must be wanting. November, 1876. John Koch, Ph. D. of Königsberg."

leaves at the three gaps in the English poems be this "broaken leafe"? Nowhere in the MS. does there seem to be any sign of a leaf cut or torn out. The conclusion on the "broaken leafe" seems such as would follow a somewhat pretentious poem.

• The commonly accepted date of J would indicate that J is not the original draft of the poem. The omission of ll. 734, 1308, and the various misreadings and omissions of single words (cf. MS. Var. at foot of text, and Note 209) in the MS., afford proof of the fact. That the MS. was not copied from C, seems clear: for it contains ll. 86, 770, 771; has the correct reading *pat*, l. 772; has no lacunae in ll. 1225, 1254; has the correct *To* in ll. 1476, 1489, and *an honge* in l. 1195; etc. Examination of the readings of J throughout the poem will show that the scribe, while a clear writer, was careless in copying, and was not able of himself to fill up lacunae or to make corrections successfully (e. g. cf. the misreadings cited below).

There are a number of facts that may seem to indicate that J was *copied from the original of C*.

(1) Often, as in other MSS., *r* and *t* were much alike in the originals: cf. Note 1106. — Evidently *an* was used for *and* sometimes in orig. of J as in that of C (*an* being very general in C): cf. Notes 239, 1195, 1371, 1718. — Evidently there was a likeness in form in the original of J (as in that of C; cf. p. ix) between *wen*, *thorn*, *3*, *y*, and *p*, or confusion in the mind of the scribe or scribes of the originals of C and J, or of C and J themselves, as to the form and use of the five characters: cf. Notes and MSS. Var. 57, 215,

272, 309, 439, 296, 670, 689, 785, 981, 1091, 1055, 1125, 1256, 1447, 1566, 1638. — Though the evidence afforded by the foregoing is helpful in connection with what follows, in itself it is not of great force.

(2) At most of the places where there were difficulties for the scribe of C, or where there are such for the reader of C, there seem to have been the same for the scribe of J¹: e. g. 242 J *bouh of lynd*, clear substitution, C *bos ne strind* corrected to *bow ne rind*; 248 J *a prenche* as if not understood, C *at prenche*; 814 *at prenche*; ? 325 J *a middel*, C *ad middel*; ? 384 J *sitte a dare*, C *sitte an dare*; 541 C *inune* later corrected to *inume*, J word omitted and *inome* added later; 764 C *scholde miste*, J *solde myste*; 748 C *ihere . . . wes*, J *a byde . . . bles*, not understanding *wes* or orig. J scribe wrote *a byde* and left space which later hand filled with *bles*, as forced a rhyme as *wes* — or neither scribe understood the orig., and C scribe changed the verb to fit *wes*, a poor choice for rhyme; 1001 J *houenetinge*, C *houentinge*; 1135 C *fuezel* first *e* deleted, second *e* on an *l*, J *fuoe*; 1260 C *hare*m, J *a tem*, a common orig. *are*m or *hare*m with *r* much like *t* (cf. (1) above); 1315 C *chil* (also 1440), J *chid*; 1353 C *mistempe* or *rempe* (orig. *r* and *t* perhaps very like), *p* like *þ*, syllable deleted, J has a different word *mis nyme*, as often in such cases; 1403 C *zeoneþ*, J *wunneþ*; 1405 C *þurþ*, J *þur*; 1449 C *reache* preceded by deleted *d* or part of *ð* on *t*, J *theche*; 1586 C *houd*

¹ Here and elsewhere in the Introduction and Notes, the MSS. Var. at foot of Text, and the Notes and references, should be consulted in connection with each citation.

sipe, J *houp sybe* for *utsipe*; 1751 C *nuzte ze*, J *Mihte lyet*; 1371 C *riht & fale londe*, J *of alle londe*; 963 poor metre and sense in both MSS.; 1400 C *wrone-, wronc-hede*, J *wlonkhede*; 321 J defective, C poor metre; 1256 C *al hit itid þurþ*, J *al i wurþ*; et al.

(3) Again, at a number of places the MSS. agree in incorrect or unusual readings: e. g., 167 *swikedom*; very notable is 364 C *an* for *am*, later corrected to *am*, J *an*; 515 *is tunge*; 614 *wnienge*, *wunying*; 660 *iworþe* for *iworde*; 120 *hi*, *he*, for *hit*, orig. dropped *t*?; 679 C smudges, J defective; 745 J *þu*, C *we* or *þe*, perhaps *wen* undotted in orig., so J scribe corrected *þe* to *þu*; 759 *mani eine*, *mony eine*; notable are 805 *þe* for *þu*, and 812 *for* for *fox*, in both MSS.; 813 *þe*, *þey*; 941 *þe wrapþe*; 1099 *wrþ sipe*; 1307 C *zette*, J *yette*; 1322 *bihaitest*; 1358 *ne ne*; 1388 *lustes*, cf. Note; 1527 *attom*, *atom*; 1550 *heare*; 1594 *wið þute*, *wyþ þute*, *lust*; 1602 *hozep*, *howep* (J scribe found the words together, and displaced *z* by *w* as often); 1624 *þe zet*, *þe yet*; 1681 *bo þe* (for *boþe*), *beo þ'*; 1731 *kinge* omitted (?); 1733 *hunke*.

(4) In l. 411 both rubricators wrote *þ* for *H*, and this was done in C in face of a direction *h*. In l. 707 are C *Nule*, J [] *le* capital omitted: either the rubricators were careless, or the fault lies with carelessness or omission in the original. In C 25, 29 the capital is omitted, though the directing letters remain: in J 309 the rubricator wrote *þ* for orig. *þz*. At 1711 there is a paragraph division in both MSS. contrary to the sense, an indication of error in the common original,

which must have been a *copy* (cf. page ix). This all together would indicate that at least some irregularities at beginnings of paragraphs arose from a defective common original.

(5) Attention has been called to the fact that in C the abbreviation for *pat* or *per* begins at l. 902, and is used quite regularly thence to l. 948, when it is discontinued until l. 1184, after which it appears fairly regularly to the end of the poem. Evidence of the identity of the originals of C and J may be found in the fact that in J this abbreviation first occurs at l. 902, and continues with much regularity up to l. 950, when it is dropped entirely (exc. *par* 1042), to be taken up again (as in C) at l. 1184, and used very frequently to the end of the poem.

(6) There are found in both C and J six of the seven short English poems printed by Morris, and all of the three French poems by Chardry (cf. pages vii, xi).

As far as can be observed, no interpolations into the matter of the original were made by the scribes of the MSS. The variations between the MSS. are due for the most part to the scribes' individual peculiarities of spelling. Carelessness in transcription caused the omission of ll. 86, 770, 771 in C, and of ll. 734, 1308 in J. In many verses single words or letters were omitted or interpolated to the detriment of the metre and, sometimes, of the sense. At several places slight differences in readings arose from failure of one or both of the scribes to understand or to hold quite closely to the original.

Although in J the characters are rarely ambiguous, and the handwriting is much more legible than that in C, when the MSS. are compared carefully from beginning to end, line for line, it is found that in more than two-thirds of the verses where variations occur, C preserves the older inflection, exhibits greater accuracy in inflection, gives the better metre, or presents the more complete or the better sense.

II. THE DATE.

The conclusions of the scholars who have sought to assign a definite date to the composition of *The Owl and the Nightingale*, range over a period of a hundred years.¹ The following points should be regarded in attempting to decide on the date :

(1) MS. Cott. is accepted as of the first half of the 13th century (cf. page vii). MS. Jes. Coll. is accepted as of the second half of the 13th century, and it seems to be a copy of the original of MS. Cott. (cf. pages x, xiii).

¹ Stevenson, edit. 1838: reign of Rich. I. — Warton, *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, edit. 1840, i. 25: "not later than Richard I." — Wright, edit. 1843, and *Biog. Brit. Lit., Anglo-Norm. Per.*, p. 439: reign of John; author lived at end of twelfth and beginning of thirteenth century. — Mätzner, *Altengl. Sprachproben*, i. 40: "zwischen 1180 und 1220." — Wülcker, Paul and Braune's *Beiträge*, i. 68-70: reign of John. — Skeat, *Chardry's Josaphatz*, pp. xlvii.-xlviii.: "between 1180 and 1220." — Ten Brink, *Ess. Eng. Lit.*, B. i., p. 218: reign of Henry III. — Brandl, *Engl. Lit.*, i. 277: "zwischen 1180 und 1220." — Börsch, *Ueber Met. u. Poet. der Altengl. Dichtung The Owl and the Nightingale*: between 1218 (1220) and 1225. — Brandl, in Paul's *Grundriss*, ii. 622: about 1220. — Morbach, *Mittelengl. Gramm.*, p. 10: about 1220. — Skeat, *Spec. of Ear. Eng.*, pt. i., p. 171: retains Morris's "A. D. 1246-1250," and adds "certainly not later than the time of Henry III." Note Clar. Press edit. of *Havelok*, p. xxvi. "perhaps as early as 1250." — Morris, *O. E. Misc.*, p. xi.: 1244-1250. — Madden, edit. 1840 of Warton, *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, i. 26: "beginning of reign of Edw. I." — Hazlitt's edit. 1871 of Warton, p. 39: "not later than Edw. I."

(2) MS. Cott. seems to be a copy of a copy (cf. page ix). In view of (1) this would seem to point to not later than 1220-1230 for the author's MS. As has been suggested (cf. page ix) the second MS. back of C *may* have been a copy and not the author's MS.

(3) The French chronicle in C ends with the death of John. It mentions the accession of Henry III. (cf. page vii). The rest of the page is left blank, as if to give space for a later continuation.¹ Blank spaces are not left elsewhere in this MS. by the French scribe (cf. at page vii list of contents of MS., ff. 216 v, 229 v, 249) or by the English scribe (cf. list, ff. 246 r, 246 v, 248 v). If the blank space on f. 232 v be supposed to have been left open contrary to the scribe's practice in order to give space for a continuation chronicling the reign of Henry III., it may be taken as evidence that the chronicle was written in C at about, or a little after, Henry's accession (1216). The fact that the French pieces fill ff. 195-232 v, and then (in the same hand²) comes a third poem of Chardry on the portion of f. 249 r left open by the scribe of the English poems which were now finished, leads to a conjecture that the French and the English parts of the MS. were written at the same time. — If this be accepted, it must be that *The Owl* (in the same hand as ff. 246-249, cf. page

¹ This fact was pointed out by Koch in his *Chardry's Josaphatz*, p. xlvii.

² It is fitting to note that, after a somewhat hasty examination of the MS., Professor F. Madden, *op. cit.*, perhaps ff. 195-232 v and ff. 249 r col. 2-261 are written by the same hand, as the *Q*'s are different. Madden, *op. cit.*, p. xxxv., states that ff. 195 to end are "by two different hands" — evidently (1) ff. 195-232 v, ff. 249 r col. 2-261; (2) ff. 233 r-249 r col. 1. Koch (cf. page xii, note), who edited the French poems, states (*op. cit.*, p. vi.) that "the old French pieces are all written by the same hand."

viii; and the last of f. 249 filled by a third poem of Chardry in the hand of ff. 195-232 v) in C must have been copied from the copy of the ? original MS. at the same time as the chronicle. It is evident at least that *The Owl* in C was copied *after* 1216. We may suppose that the author of the chronicle or those who might have extended it, would perhaps find many reasons for being unwilling to write about a reigning monarch: hence the chronicle may have been copied and still left open much later than the date of the accession of Henry.—Here it is to be observed that Koch assigns¹ the poems of Chardry to the beginning of the 13th century. These poems in C he shows to be a copy of a copy. It has just been shown that they seem to have been copied at the same time as *The Owl* in C, and that *The Owl* in C is a copy of a copy (cf. page ix).

(4) The fact that C contains the earlier MS. of *Lazamon* is little to be considered, since the *Lazamon* MS. was originally not a part of C (cf. page vii).

(5) In his *Old English Miscellany*, Morris claimed (p. xi.) that “the poems in the Cotton and the Jesus MSS. were composed before 1250, and probably soon after the year 1244.” This conclusion he derived from the facts (1) that in the poem *When Holy Church Is Under Foot* “Papal exactions are spoken of as a *present* grievance”; (2) that in the poem *A Luue Ron a King* Henry is twice referred to; and (3) that in 1244 King Henry was “obliged to remonstrate with the Pope on the exactions of his agents,” and “a formal

¹ Koch, *op. cit.*, p. xlvi.

complaint was made to the council at Lyons," and that in "1246, 1247, Parliament complained to, and remonstrated with, the Pope on his exactions." — A glance at Green's *Short History*, ch. iii., sect. v., will show that as early as 1231 it was generally recognized that Holy Church was under foot. In 1231 the populace, the soldiery, the civil and the political authorities, perhaps even the King, were participants in a general conspiracy to resist the exactions of Rome at that time. But the conditions in all the earlier part of the reign of Henry III. would justify assignment of the poems to an even earlier date on these arguments. It would seem that we need not feel forced by Morris's conclusion to date the MSS., or either of them, as late as 1244.

Even though it be accepted that *A Luue Ron* and *When Holy Church* were written between 1244 and 1250, Morris's generalization that "the poems in the Cotton and Jesus MSS. were composed" within this period, does not follow necessarily. Neither *A Luue Ron* nor *When Holy Church* is in C. The only reason for supposing that they were in the common original of C and J, is that six of the short poems in J are found in C. If the short poems *O. E. Misc.* XX.—XXV. in J were copied from the same original as the versions in C (cf. page xiii), evidently *O. E. Misc.* II., III., IV., V. were inserted after *The Owl* before XX.—XXV. were begun.¹ Next were copied the first of the short poems in C (*O. E. Misc.* XX.) and a part of the sec-

¹ For this and the following, consult list of contents of C and J at pages vii, x.

ond (O. E. Misc. XXI.), a part of which remains to us. Perhaps next followed the rest of XXI. and O. E. Misc. XXVI (*Will and Wit*, next in C and the only short English poem in C not in J) and one or more lost poems. Next come the last part of O. E. Misc. XI., and VI. and VII. (none of which is in C, the last of them *When Holy Church*). Next are the other four short poems in C (O. E. Misc. XXII.–XXV. incl.), and then O. E. Misc. VIII., IX., X. (*A Luue Ron*), and the first part of XI., none of which is in C. Next follows the fragment, O. E. Misc. XII. (preceded by lost matter); and then come XIII.–XVIII.; none of which is in C. Then follows the piece on f. 268 r, then *Ici comence de Tobye*, and then O. E. Misc. XIX., none of which is in C. If the shifting of leaves suggested at page xii were made, one would have *The Passion*, *The Owl*, II.–V. incl., XX., fragment of XXI., lost matter, XXV., VIII.–XI. incl., VI., VII., XXII.–XXIV., lost matter, XII.–XVIII. incl., and the rest as in the present arrangement. The present arrangement points to O. E. Misc. II.–V., VI.–VII., VIII.–XIX. as groups of poems inserted by the scribe of J. The shifted arrangement points to the same groups of insertions, but locates XXV. in J out of the order it has in C. If the idea of inserted groups be true, the date of *The Owl* is not to be determined by means of *When Holy Church* or *A Luue Ron*. Moreover, the fact that these poems are not found in the earlier MS. stands in the way of their being considered as helping to the date. Their appearance in J means merely that they were composed before MS. J was copied.

(6) In view of (1), "King Henri" (l. 1091) must be held to be Henry II., unless there be the unusual meaning of a wish for the King's soul after he may die, or unless "Henri" be other than a king of England. It does not follow that the poem was written immediately after Henry's death. Here may seem reason to think, however, that it was composed not *very* late in the reign of the next Henry.

(7) The peace (ll. 1730 *et seq.*) that Börsch¹ suggests may be the peace and festivities of 1220, is perhaps merely in sarcasm, England being really little at peace in all this period. It may well be the peace of the community of birds, or of the neighborhood of Dorset, the "King's peace." The King may be supposed by the birds to be directly concerned in their affairs, and perhaps expected to interfere, as in ll. 1049 *et seq.*, 1091 *et seq.*

(8) The passages concerning cursing (ll. 1179, 1311) may have been suggested by the many Papal interdicts and excommunications between 1200 and 1220.² But such, public and private, were not at all uncommon at any time during the century, though they were especially frequent under Innocent III. The interdict of 1208-1214 in England must have made a lasting impression. — This all could give but corroborative evidence. Moreover, the mere fact of the power of excommunication as an attribute of priesthood, would give sufficient suggestion for the passages in question.

(9) One may accept Börsch's suggestion³ that *sum*

¹ *Ueber Metrik und Poetik*, etc.: cf. Bibliography.

² Börsch, *op. cit.*

³ *Op. cit.*

of *Rome* (l. 1016) is an allusion to Cardinal Guala and his mission to the Scotch in 1218. But one sees from the context (ll. 907 *et seq.*, 995-1030) that the mission may have been to Ireland, or possibly to Norway or Galway, as well as to Scotland. Then, *sum* (cf. Note 1016) may be plural, and thus a number of missions may be alluded to. The concern and activity of the Papal authorities to establish peace and some ecclesiastical discipline in disorganized Ireland between 1150 and 1200, is well known.

(10) The story of the knight and the nightingale (ll. 1049 *et seq.*; cf. Note), may have been common property. It is found, however, recorded in Neckam, who was popular at the end of the 12th century.¹ As Courthope² suggests, the *Lai de Laustic* of Marie de France may have suggested details about the snares.

(11) The so-called *Proverbs of Alfred* were popular especially in the 12th century and the first part of the 13th.³ It must be borne in mind, however, that the proverbs may well have been current later (witness those in *Proverbs of Hendyng*⁴), though not in literary form or not ascribed to Alfred. — The parallel to l. 638 in the *Roman de Renart* of the last of the 12th century or

¹ Cf. Wright's edition, Rolls Series, Preface.

² *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, i. 135.

Il n'ot Vallet en sa meisun
Ne face engin, reis, a lasenus,
Puis le mettent par le vergier.
Ni ot codre, ne chastainier,
U il ne mettent laz e glu,
Tant que pris l'unt e retenu.

³ Cf. Mätzner, *Altengl. Sprachproben*, i. 40: also Note 176.

⁴ Skeat, *Specimens*, ii. "A. D. 1272-1307."

the beginning of the 13th,¹ may mean little. It is found also in a collection of the early 12th century.¹

(12) The *débat* began to flourish in French at the end of the 12th century and the first half of the 13th.

(13) The short couplet began to have wide vogue in French at the end of the 12th century and the first half of the 13th.

(14) The excellence of the versification² would point to a late date — but perhaps not so in view of the general excellence of the poem, which indicates a superior poet.

(15) The rareness of occurrences (cf. page li) of French derivatives points to a comparatively early period. This is notable in view of the *impression* that the reader receives of acquaintance on the part of the author with literature other than the English.

(16) After mature study of the language of all the works in English of the period, Morsbach placed *The Owl* among the important bases for study of the middle Southern dialect, and accepted the date “about 1220” for the poem.³

In view of (6) the poem was probably not composed earlier than the death of Henry II., i. e. 1189. In view of (3), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), the poem could have been composed between 1189 and 1200, or at any time during the century following 1189. In view of (1) and (2) considered with (3), the earlier MS. was written after 1216, perhaps ten or twenty years after 1216; and the poem, of which this MS. is

¹ Cf. Note 638.

² Cf. remarks on Versification, p. lxiv.

³ *Mittelenglische Grammatik*, pp. 9-10.

a copy of a copy, would seem to have been composed perhaps ten or fifteen years earlier (one giving time for the copying of the copy of ? the original). Then, (1), (2), (3), would seem to point to *about* 1216-1225, a conclusion assisted by (15) and confirmed by the linguistic characteristics (16). This is negatived only by possibly (14). In (5) all the actual *evidence* (not *opinion*) that has been offered for a later date, is shown not to bear on the question.

In all this it must be observed that the argument for date rests (1) on the supposed date of the extant manuscripts, especially of C; and (2) on comparison of the form and language of the manuscripts of the poem with the form and language of other works of the period. It is clear that where direct evidence of the age of a manuscript is not found in definite statement or allusion, there must always be more or less doubt concerning the actual age. It is well known, too, that the dates of practically all thirteenth century works in English are uncertain, and that therefore argument based on resemblance of characteristics of form and language in these works can afford but evidence pointing to relative location as to time among these works.

III. THE AUTHOR.

1. *The Name.* Though Wright¹ and Stevenson² leaned to the opinion that the author of *The Owl and the Nightingale* was the Nicholas of Guildford whom

¹ Edit. of 1843, Preface p. vii. *Biog. Brit. Lit., An.-Norm. Per.*, pp. 438-439.

² Edit. of 1838, Preface.

the birds chose as umpire (cf. ll. 191, 1746 *et seq.*), scholars generally hold that Nicholas did not compose the poem. Says Mätzner of Nicholas, "His self-praise would be surprising if he were the author. Probably he was an ecclesiastic in the place mentioned, whom the poet honored."¹ Wülcker remarks, "Nicholas is always named in a manner which makes it impossible that he can be the author, or if he were he must have been one of the most conceited of men (cf. ll. 191, 1755). Moreover, the poet says at the beginning, 'Ich was in one sumere dale,' etc. (i. e. the poet was present during the dispute). Nicholas is always spoken of as an absent person who dwelt in Portesham in Dorset—and at the close we have (l. 1789), 'Mid pisse worde forþ hi ferden,' etc. If he were one with Nicholas, why should the author let the birds go away, instead of coming forth from his concealment, or why could he not tell us of the verdict?"² It may be replied to this that the poet had no intention of giving a definitely formulated statement of his solution of the question that he had raised. — Ten Brink says, "The manner in which his virtues, his justice, prudence, and wisdom are dwelt upon, makes it impossible to regard him as the poet himself, because such self-laudation would ill agree with those qualities. But there is no doubt that

¹ *Altengl. Sprachproben*, i. 40. — The idea of choosing a person as an honor and as a means of praising him and furthering his welfare, seems to have been generally the motive for choosing the judge in the Provençal *partimen*. The same seems true for the most part of the Old French *jeu-parti*. Cf. Knobloch, *Die Streitgedichte im Provenzalischen und Altfranzösischen*, p. 48; Diss. Breslau, 1886; Selbach, *Das Streitgedicht in der Altprovenzalischen Lyrik*, 1887, in: Stenger's *Ausgab. u. Abhand.*, vol. 57; Meyer, *Dern. Trouv.*, p. 69, note.

² Paul and Braune's *Beiträge*, i. 70.

the poet could take the outlines of the portrait of Master Nicholas from his own character, and that he depicts himself in his friend. Perhaps the passage especially applies to him, according to which Master Nicholas had formerly been dissolute, and had liked the nightingale and 'other gentle and small creatures,' but had since become staid, and would in no wise let himself be led into wrong by old love'' (ll. 202 *et seq.*).¹ There is something to be said for Saintsbury's suggestion² that the argument on the basis of excessive self-praise does not have so much weight for the 13th century as for a later period.

If the authorship be denied to Nicholas, we have but one other name to which to assign it. On f. 228 of the Jesus College MS., at the end of *The Passion of Our Lord*, the poem immediately preceding *The Owl*, is a note by a former owner of the MS., probably Thomas Wilkins, LL. B.,³ Rector of St. Mary, Glamorganshire: "On parte of a broaken leafe of this MS. I found these verses written, whereby the Author may bee gues't at (viz.)

Mayster Johan eu greteþ. of Guldeuorde þo.
And lendeþ [sendeþ ?] eu to seggen. þat synge nul he no. [mo ?]
Ne [Nu ?] on þisse wise he wille endy his song :
God Louerd of Heuene. beo vs alle among :
Amen."

¹ *Early English Literature*, Bohn, pp. 217-218.

² *Short Hist. of Eng. Lit.*, p. 61.

³ On a fly-leaf at the beginning of the MS. is: "Bibliotheca Coll. Jesu Oxon. hoc Manuscriptum (cum 2bus alijs) humillimè D. D. D. Tho. Wilkins LL. B. Rector B. M. super Monte . . . The name of Tho. Wilkins occurs on the last page . . .

The maker of this note does not state in what part of the MS. he found the "broaken leafe." Was it a fly-leaf? Or was it one of the leaves apparently missing at ff. 253 v, 261 v?¹ It seems that we can do no more than conjecture what part of the poems in the MS. was written by John. There is no more reason to assign *The Passion* to John, than to assign any other or others of the poems. Indeed the conclusion of *The Passion* is such as to render it very improbable that any such matter as is quoted in the note was attached to that poem. Moreover, it has been shown (cf. page x) that a large part of f. 228 r on which *The Passion* ends, and all of f. 228 v, are blank except for later scribblings. The colophon probably belonged to a poem lost between ff. 253 v and 254 r, or 261 v and 262 r, or elsewhere in J or the corresponding part of its original. As all the pieces in J seem to be in one handwriting, it is possible that *The Owl* and the poem with Wilkins's colophon were both in the original of J. But this hypothetical poem and its colophon are not in the older MS. C, and may have been inserted in the series of poems by the scribe of J, as we have suggested (cf. page xxi) several other poems were inserted.

It is possible, then, that in John of Guildford we have the author of *The Owl*, who introduced Nicholas out of compliment, or because of a desire to better the fortunes of his relative or friend. But if we accept this we must bear in mind the real slightness of the grounds that we have for declaring the possibility. No mention of John is in C. We have little reason for supposing that

¹ Cf. page xii.

the "broaken leafe" followed *The Owl* in the original of J. The colophon was not written in the blank space at the end of *The Owl* in J fol. 241 v, col. 2. Moreover, it does not follow that if John wrote another poem in this MS. he wrote *The Owl*. — Probably we are safest in agreeing with Wülcker in ascribing the poem "to an unknown poet who wrote the work in honor of Nicholas of Guildford," or at least to an unknown poet who in his poem did honor to his friend.¹

The name of the author matters little after all : it is the man, his character, his mind and thought, his attitude toward life and art, that are really important.

2. *The Man and Poet*. Under Henry II. the kingdom of England came to include not only all England and more than half of Ireland, but also above one-third of modern France, more than half of France of that day. From his parents Henry had inherited Anjou and Touraine, Maine and Normandy. Through his brother he ruled Brittany. By his marriage with Eleanor of Guienne he came to be governor of Poitou, Auvergne, Marche, Gascony, Aquitaine, and Guienne. England became the centre of all this territory, and London its capital. Commercial and social intercourse between all the parts of the realm was practically unrestricted. By trade with the French and Provençal provinces, merchants of London and other English ports gained fortunes

¹ Of Nicholas Madden notes: "In all probability he was the vicar of Portesham (near Abbotsbury), and the chartulary of Abbotsbury, in the possession of the Earl of Ilchester, might perhaps determine the point, and fix the age of the poem. . . ." (Warton's *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, edit. 1840, i. 26.)

rapidly and easily. The products of northern and southern France were sold through England, and English goods were spread in exchange on the other side of the Channel. To the English capital, led by duty, by curiosity, and by the desire for gain, came soldier and sailor, courtier and merchant, poet and scholar. All found here satisfaction of their desires, appreciation and encouragement of their peculiar worth, and employment for their highest powers.

It was in great part this close intercourse, the influence of the broader culture and more catholic and refined experience of the North and South of France, during the latter half of the twelfth century, that gave the English people and the English literature the breadth and polish that they developed through the next century. True it is that to speak of English literature in the twelfth century is impossible. Composition in English during this period was unadvisable as it was unprofitable. Those to whom the writer was forced to turn for recognition and reward, the cultivated and courtly, had their tastes tempered by the refinements, and their ears attuned to the elaborate melodies, of French and Provençal art. From the landing of Taillefer the audience of the fashionable and polite had no regard for the harsh and tedious strains of the older English song.

Following the precedent to a greater or less degree practiced by his predecessors, Henry while Duke of Normandy had made himself a patron of literature. At Bordeaux, William of Poitou, the father of the troubadours, and Eleanor, his cultivated and brilliant daughter, had held court; and there the troubadours and

poets of all Provençal territories had betaken themselves with the assurance of sympathy, appreciation, favor, and reward. As Queen of France Eleanor preserved and extended this patronage, both in the court of the French King and in her own capital Bordeaux, adding to her train of Provençal poets many French singers.

The marriage of Henry and Eleanor in 1152 and their assumption of the English throne in 1154, produced no discontinuance of this patronage by the two rulers, but made the English court the home of the most able and gifted French and Provençal poets. Such was the prestige that this patronage by Henry and Eleanor gave to Provençal and French poetry in England, that it is estimated from actual count¹ that two-thirds of the French writers of the period (1154-1206) were Englishmen or connected closely with the English court; while many of the most famous Provençal troubadours lived for extended periods in England.

The Norman conquest and the policy of William and his successors led to the institution and fostering of an extensive ecclesiastical establishment. Abbeys and monasteries were founded in great numbers, and rapidly attained great wealth and prestige. Churchmen of insular and Continental origin and training gained such influence in the political world that they were numbered among the most able and potent counsellors and administrators of the realm. The comparative peace of the kingdom, the rapid growth of the Church in possessions and authority in England, and the close association with

¹ Jacobs, *The Fables of Æsop as First Printed by Caxton*, London, David Nutt, i. p. 180.

the Continent, led to the re-establishment of learning in the island. The fruits of the efforts of Alcuin and his successors were borne back to England in the persons of a host of cultivated and scholarly men and in the inspiration of hundreds of manuscripts. Libraries were established, books were imported and copied with the utmost diligence. A body of students grew up eager for truth and knowledge. Between the schools of the island and those of the mainland, passed and repassed hundreds of scholars, noble and plebeian, seeking new attainments or new fields for the dissemination of what they had already made their own.

As to the courtier, so to the scholar the vernacular was a barbarous tongue. To him, cleric or layman, Latin, the common medium of communication among all nations, with the prestige of centuries, was the language of learning. Encouraged by such rulers as Henry Beauclerc and Henry II., the subjects of the English monarchs produced during the twelfth century a mass of literature in Latin that included many writings which at once became current authorities throughout Europe. The body of this Latin literature is made up of sermons, scientific and medical works, chronicles, epigrams, satires, treatises in literary criticism, political writings, romances, and verse extending in pretension from the drinking song to the epic; compositions ranging from the lucubrations of the most learned and sedate historians, theologians, and savants of the day to the ribald catches and irreverent satires of the wandering clerks.

During that portion of the thirteenth century with

which the student of *The Owl* is concerned, Paris still remained the general centre of learning of all kinds. To it went year after year great numbers of English students who had been trained in the French tongue for this culmination of their preliminary studies; and from it came to England scores of scholars seeking fame and position in the schools, and patronage among churchmen and laity. The French literature and the French language still retained the prestige which they had held as the offspring of Latin, and as the most widely used and most polished and artistic vernacular expression in Europe. Englishmen still cultivated the French language and still read and imitated French writings: but already in the first years of the century conditions were in force that were preparing for the neglect of French as French.

A consciousness of its own power and its own destiny had been growing in the English people. A realization of self-respect, of pride in its own and of duty to its own, was coming into being. The final loss of the French provinces in 1204 made the English almost the only subjects of the English King. A recognition of nationality that had been evident in an instinctive demand for a nation and not an empire, was fostered by the events of the last years of John which culminated in the Magna Charta and the establishment at least in name of a constitutional government. As the civil and political separation of Frenchman and Englishman increased until it led to the proclamation of Louis in 1244 and to Henry's retaliatory confiscation of the possessions of Frenchmen in England, there grew the acceptance of the right of the English-speaking public in demanding

a literature of its own, and the recognition of the need of satisfying this demand. — Moreover, the ill life of the wandering clerks of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the composers of a great part of the lyrical poetry in the Latin, came to be frowned upon more and more by the regular clergy. During the first half of the thirteenth century the Church gradually prepared by ordinance after ordinance for the severe decrees of the latter half.¹ At the opening of the century the jongleur and the Goliardic clerk were constant companions, and often were merged into one. Consequently the clerk not infrequently at an early period did what he was forced to do as the century progressed: he used the vernacular instead of the Latin. Thus he obtained an increased audience and favor, and a better living. From this cause arose many original poems in French and English. Again, a number of Goliardic Latin poems were given a vernacular form either by the clerks or by their jongleur friends.

For the new poetry in English French, it is true, was to be the pattern and model and source, in great part. Latin was to be the tongue for the preservation and dissemination of the sciences. But the monk and the courtier versed in the literature of learning and of elegance, the clerk and later the friar who had been taught to know men and to know nature by long wanderings, and the simple uneducated balladist and song-maker, in numbers that increased as time passed, uttered of the best within them, of the best that they had

¹ Hubatsch, *Die Lateinischen Vagantenlieder des Mittelalters*, Gorlitz, 1870, pp. 94 *et seq.*

learned, for the instruction and delight of the great body of English-speaking people, for Englishmen in their own tongue. It was thus that the real literature in English began: for this were composed the *Brut* of Lazamon, the *Ormulum*, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, the political, the ecclesiastical, the nature, and the love lyrics, and the prose and the poetical romances, of the thirteenth century.

Never having been conquered and settled by the Northmen in a former time, the South of England preserved more of the real Anglo-Saxon national spirit than any other part of the island. By location it was very accessible to most of the new influences that were potent in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. From these two facts one would be led to expect what seems to be the actual result, that the South would be the home of the first group of writers of the new English. Here undoubtedly, before more than a few scattered works were written in other parts of the island, was produced a very considerable body of literature in prose and verse. Here were composed in the twelfth century the *Poema Morale*, the *Pater Noster*, and probably several versions of the *Proverbs of Alfred*; and in the first half of the thirteenth century, the *Ancren Riwle*, the *Lives of Margaret, Juliana, and Katherine*, the *Wohunge of ure Lauerde*, *Hali Meidenhad*, *Sawles Warde*, the *Brut* of Lazamon, the *Trinity Margaretha*, and the lyrics from the Cotton and Jesus MSS. printed by Morris (cf. pages vii, x).

A very careful study of the poetry of this period in the South with exception of the *Brut*, will show that

the subject-matter consists in whole poems or in parts, directly or indirectly, in great part of two themes. The first of these is the praise of the glory of virginity and of devotion to the Heavenly Lover, and the presentation of the terrors of Death and the horrors of Hell. The second is the utterance of the results of actual observation and experience in life, helpful and of practical application for every-day living in the world. These utterances take the form of wise saws or popular proverbs (as in the *Proverbs of Alfred*); or they are declarations of personal loss as the result of failure to conform to rules that the poet recognizes as being essential for right living (as in the *Poema Morale*); or they are deliberate statements of the prevalence of specific sins or peccadilloes, and announcement of the inevitable payment that will be exacted from the erring (as in *A Lutel Soth Sermun*). In all these Southern works there is seen a desire to help men to live for their best good on earth and thereafter. The method by which this living shall be done is usually the method prescribed by the mediæval Church, worship of virginity, avoidance of sins of the flesh by complete denial of all fleshly desires and full abnegation of all material goods and of all connection with family or friend. Asceticism, in short, is the general method at the base of the efforts of practically all of the writers toward a solution of the task of right living. It is only in such works as the *Proverbs of Alfred* and *The Owl and the Nightingale*, where the plain sense of the common people has its way, that the larger recognition of the worth of this world and man's life in it for their own

sakes as well as for an ultimate end, is recognized or urged.

In the group of poets that were active in the South of England at the beginning of the 13th century, the author of *The Owl and the Nightingale* stands pre-eminent. Of striking vigor and originality of mind, possessing a sane critical judgment founded on a considerable culture, and endowed with astonishing poetical gifts for his time and environment, he produced a composition that seems the earliest, and from many points of view the best, original long poem of a wholly imaginative character written in English before the time of Chaucer.

Though he was probably connected with the Church,¹ the poet turned from the praise of the saints and the cult of the Virgin. He threw off entirely the religious *domination* which, while it inspired, was limiting sadly and directing into an alien channel, the literary efforts in English of his cultivated contemporaries. It is true that his poem is beneath all didactic: but it is not ecclesiastical, or merely religious. Neither (A) *the teaching* nor (B) *the method of presentation*, is that of the learned or the priestly writers in English of his day. They both are rather representative of the "popular"

¹ "The question arises, if the author was not a merry, half-ecclesiastical, half-secular wandering cleric, a student of many years' standing, one who, perhaps, had long studied at Oxford. The time had come when these *clerkes*, who, for several centuries, had composed in Latin, were to turn to the national art. The deep seriousness beneath his cheerful humor indicates that the author was a mature man. The wandering cleric had possibly, several years before, laid aside the pilgrim's staff, and accepted a living, perhaps in Dorset or an adjacent county." Ten Brink, *Ear. Eng. Lit.*, Bohn, pp. 214-215.

element: they are based on practical experience, breadth of view, and common-sense.

(A) The poet was not an exhorter to virginity and asceticism. To him life, with all the manifold goods that it brings, was precious for its own sake. He was thoroughly human, and sympathetically responsive to all of worth about him. Constantly in the verses we are delighted with minute touches that could come only from an appreciative, sympathetic observer (a) of *Nature* and *the lower animals* and (b) of *human life and character*.¹

(a) He who reads the whole poem sympathetically feels that it was not merely for the sake of form that the poet introduced himself as loitering among the blossomed trees and bushes in an out-of-the-way, dusky nook of a dale far from possible interruption; not merely for form that he tells how, catching the song of the nightingale as she rejoiced because of the sweetness and freshness of green leaves and flowered twigs, and how, hearing the challenge to the owl in her old, ivy-covered stump, he crouched down among the bushes and listened with keen delight to the debate that followed while dusk gathered about, and dusk became dark, and night at last yielded to morning (cf. ll. 1687, 1718). The poet was not a mere cloistered monk or pent-up

¹ It will be observed that a number of the points made depend to a degree on passages that are based more or less on proverbial sayings, or current figures, or what *may be* such. The marked personal element at these places, the vividness, the aptness, and the *caring*, in these passages, indicate that the poet was not merely utilizing a "popular" figure for helping expression. How many and how much of apparently proverbial passages and current figures are really such, is a matter difficult to determine (cf. Note 176).

scholar writing after a mere form. Many a day he had wandered through the country, keenly alive to his surroundings. Had it not been so he could not have made his poem. It was written close to life and Nature. It breathes everywhere the open "upland" air.

In the warmth and thrill of spring and early summer the poet had rejoiced with the lily and the rose at the coming of the nightingale (ll. 433 *et seq.*). When the long nights came, when naught was green but the home of the owl (l. 617), he had shivered with the poor miserable creatures that were longing for a little warmth (ll. 523 *et seq.*). He had seen the nimble, keen-eyed hare elude the hounds (ll. 373-384). He had watched the hunt when the fox, for all his wiles, was brought to earth and lost his brush (ll. 809 *et seq.*). With sympathetic humorous appreciation he had beheld the cat clinging safe in her tree bayed about by her pursuers (ll. 809 *et seq.*, 831-834). He had laughed at the hen on one leg in the snow squawking in helpless distress (ll. 413 *et seq.*). He had pitied the patient horse, beaten and goaded on under a heavy pack or before a great load, and then left to stand at the mill-door in the hot summer sun or in the bleak winds of winter (ll. 773-782). On the edge of a lonely marsh he had seen the hawk, baited by carrion crows, sail from its lofty perch in lordly contempt of its base revilers (ll. 303-308). He had pondered on the phenomena of lower life, and had read into them the life of himself. Through a great interest in things, a great caring, he had come to humanize the creatures with which he met. It is this

that gave him to write that charming little serio-comic episode of domestic life in the falcon's nest, when the mother-bird is enraged at the foulness of one of her brood, and screeches at her offspring much as the poet had often heard a peasant mother scold (ll. 101-126).

The attitude and treatment in this episode are typical of the attitude toward external life throughout the poem. The poet may have had some suggestion of the owl and the nightingale as debaters, though we find no traces of it; yet no suggestion could enable him to present with such remarkable dramatic truth and such sustained consistency as he has attained, the accepted dispositions of the birds, their consequent attitudes toward life, their interests, their likes and dislikes, and their physical characteristics, deportment, and mannerisms—to present them, yet for the most part to make the birds in the heat of debate deliver themselves of themselves, show not only their outer characteristics, but all their inner beings. There is no artificiality: all is real, true. As we read, we have no thought that the birds are speaking for the sake of the debate: to us the debate is because the birds are what they are. The owl and the nightingale are not puppets, they are not pretending—defence and attack are of vital import to each of them. So real has the poet made the contestants, so true their humanized characters, that, as we read, we almost feel that he began to write because of the birds and not because of an ulterior purpose. No suggestion could enable him to accomplish this effect. His inspiration and his success could come only from that attitude toward life which has been indicated in the episode

of the falcons — sympathy for the great and the small, pervaded by a realization of the humor in all.

As the poet knew the other creatures, he knew the owl and the nightingale well,¹ and he loved them both. True it is that to his mind each was defective, each was lacking in qualities that were needed for a perfect activity. Yet each was dear to him for the excellences that she embodied in her life. The nightingale stood to him, as to his contemporaries, for the melody, the sweetness, the grace, the beautiful in life — for the æsthetic, that which ministered to, and existed for, pleasure and joy. Her use was in this, to attract to the delight of living for its own sake, to the utilization of all the gifts for enjoyment and for the expression of joy, that creatures were endowed with. But while she ministered so, while indeed, as she claimed, much of her activity rightly interpreted and accepted would make her a trustworthy guide and servant in serious things — there was danger of her enticing to a course in which pleasure was all, and in which duty and the stern realities of life were ignored or scorned.

It was in the owl that the poet found embodied the serious view of life. She was despised for withdrawing from other creatures. She was abused and beset and beaten to death by high and low, by man (cf. ll. 1111, 1165, 1315, 1607) and by bird (cf. ll. 275, etc.), because she was different from others. She was called

¹ In a great part of these pages, of course, there is taken for granted the convention which the poet adopted and had to adopt in order to compose his debate, namely that each of the birds really *had* the characteristics of exterior and deportment that men were wont to attribute to her kind, and as well the human disposition and activity and attitude toward life that would be consistent with those characteristics.

foul (ll. 32, 85, 625) and blind (ll. 239, 363). Yet as the accusation of foulness and blindness was exaggerated, so was ignored the true worth of her life and her activity. Hers were days and nights of meditation and of usefulness that comes of meditation. Her apparent withdrawal from the delights of the world gave her insight into the under principles of things (ll. 1187 *et seq.*), taught her how to admonish for good (ll. 887, 1219 *et seq.*), showed her where comfort and consolation were needed, and enabled her to give to those in distress. Wherever degradation or misery was found, she was a dispenser of her good. She was no respecter of persons (cf. ll. 905-930). She would hold all living things to the truer and deeper. Her character made her a bird of infinite usefulness. Even her strength and ugliness were a means to assist mankind. In death she rewarded her murderers by protecting their crops (cf. ll. 1121, 1615 *et seq.*). To her the nightingale was but a chatterbox, an empty singer of nothingnesses (ll. 559, etc.), who was without any of her own practical usefulness in the world.

It was to the owl that the poet leaned mainly. Yet he saw wherein she was lacking. Despite their worth, her activity and her personality contained elements repellent to all well-balanced beings, elements that would almost inevitably lead to a narrow, cramped existence. Mere seriousness or usefulness, even the happiness that comes of serious living and practical service, was not enough. The right life was made up of these and something more. The life of the owl needed as its complement the life of the nightingale, the joy of being and

doing for the sake of being and doing. God made the world not merely for lamenting and for consoling distress, but as well for rejoicing and for sympathy with joy. Life was serious if rightly led, and it demanded the utmost of all who partook in it: yet that very seriousness could not exist healthily and healthfully in its common, less in its highest, aspirations and endeavors, without joyousness.

(b) No mere lover of bird and beast and wood and stream, could have written *The Owl and the Nightingale*. To see as he saw, to know as he knew, to present as he presented, the poet must have had a broad experience and a deep sympathy with human kind. He is (1) too catholic to be the supporter of a party or an order,¹ (2) too evenly balanced to be soured by experience.

(1) To the poet the priesthood is not for the priesthood. For him holy orders are but for God and man. His poem is not of the closet or cloister. It is redolent of the atmosphere of out-of-doors, the atmosphere of life. When he speaks of the monastery and the church, it is as if he were looking in from a world without (cp. l. 729, etc.). His respect for the priesthood is deep, and his ideal of what the priest should be is high. Yet he is not afraid to criticise. He hints (l. 1179) that the ecclesiastic is free with anathema. When he

¹ The poet is very frank, very impartial and judicial. As is true of all that is general or universal, the matter and the presentation could then or now be appropriated perhaps to *many* single local or contemporary conditions (note the oft-made suggestion of a veiled presentation of some contemporary strife), but not definitely to one alone, and not to the local or the contemporary alone.

has a fling at the rude barbarians of outland Ireland, Scotland, Galway, and Norway, who would not listen to the missions sent from Rome to teach them how to live (l. 1016), his allusion to the empty chattering of Irish priests (l. 322) gives us to suppose that perhaps he ascribes the degradation of the people partly, at least, to the worthlessness of their spiritual advisers. He is outspoken in his declarations against the abuses that have crept into the Church, the bestowing of benefices because of influence, and the enriching of children and the incompetent, while worth goes begging (ll. 1761-1778). He sees what the clerks and the people generally are beginning to see clearly and to jeer at and curse. But he never jeers or curses. He convicts churchman and layman by statement of honest fact, and corrects with a kindly eye.

The whole poem is for the sake of man and sane living. The wonderful humanizing of its personages, and the sanity and moderation of its teachings, could develop but from intimate acquaintance with human life and from participation in its joys and distresses, its needs and its dangers. It is not merely to atmosphere, underlying principles, general tendencies in the poem, that one must look for this. It is manifested on the surface in details everywhere.¹ In the late fall the poet had been of many a party when friend foregathered with friend before the broad hearth, and the cup passed around amid homely mirth with jest and pleasantries (ll. 475 *et seq.*). He had exulted with the crowd when the unskilled wrestler with his one trick had

¹ See note on page xxxviii.

thrown the champion (l. 795). He had seen the fool stake his all upon one throw, and when the dice were uncovered, slink away amid the mocking shouts of the spectators (l. 1666). He had helped the blind man who had been feeling his way along the path, and, unaware of the ditch before him, had plunged into its filth before the poet could give him warning (ll. 1237-1240). In the midst of winter, when frosts had made the earth like iron, and snow had covered all the land, he had seen the poverty-stricken huddled together for warmth, and his heart had gone out with yearning pity (ll. 523 *et seq.*). He had known life. Distress he had seen everywhere: yet in that he found no ground to be dejected. In spite of all, men are happy, and life is a blessing: that is the atmosphere of his poem.

(2) The poet could not become a pessimist,¹ though in his work he does dwell more on the afflictions of men than on their joys; nor could he preach the narrow living of the monastery. As distress was everywhere, so was sin. Yet this was no cause to turn and flee. God gave man passions, the powers that go to make for enjoyment, gave them for good, if rightly used. It was for man to use, and not to refuse. The accepting of life as it is, because of the possibilities of usefulness and goodness and happiness that it gives if the passions and inclinations of man be indulged and directed with reason,—this it is that caused the poet to depart so radically from the ecclesiastics of his day in his attitude toward love between man and woman.

¹ It is worth observing that none of the bitter, the hard, selfish, cynical wisdom of the proverb literature (especially the later *Proverbs of Hendyng*), is found in *The Owl*.

“Bo wuch ho bo, vich luue is fele bitweone wepmon and wimmane” (ll. 1378-79). But so only if it be lawful love. Not only the poet's direct statements concerning love, but also all the arguments he brings against the associations of the nightingale and the influence of her song, apply admirably against the atmosphere and influence of the Love-matter of Provençal and French literature of the times. Those who go beyond the law, are mad: their love is foul and they are accursed (ll. 1380-86). At least one simple maid with face tense with passion, he has saved from the seducer who has beset her until she has almost fallen (ll. 1423-66). Maid and wife he has known to fall: but he turns to his reader with (ll. 1413-16), “He may blame for a lascivious act who himself sins worse in thought.” The adulterer he cannot understand. The man is but a fool: he condemns his soul, and did he know the truth, he would be possessed with disgust for the object of his passion (ll. 1473-1510). Often the poet has seen the ruined home that he pictures. The husband spends his all on one utterly beneath his lovely wife, whom he leaves ill clad and worse fed in a desolate hovel. When he returns home he has naught but curses for the abused woman. Her endeavors to please him are rewarded with blows. The breach widens, and she has her revenge (ll. 1523-50). Again, he has seen many a husband led by jealousy to such mad freaks that he has driven his wife to just what he would prevent (ll. 1551-62; 1049-54, 1075-90).

Surely all this experience, which he feels so deeply, would be enough to turn the poet against love. But

not so: he has seen the other side. He gives us to know that his reply is that of the nightingale to the owl concerning her song:

“ For nis a worlde þing so god,
þat ne mai do sum un-god
ʒif me hit wule turne amis.” (ll. 1363-65.)

He opposes the charming picture of the happy home of “many a” knight and merchant and bondman, who “Luueþ and hald his wif ariht,” — of the home in which the husband loves and honors his wife; in which the wife strives her utmost to please her husband with all little acts of thoughtfulness and care that she may; in which, when the needs of them both (and the expression of the poet marks the oneness of their interests) call the man away, the wife remains longing and yearning for her spouse, troubled and fearful for him amid the duties of the day, and lying awake during the long night hours listening to the owl who vainly strives to comfort her, until the steps that have seemed miles to her have been recovered and her loved one returns again into her arms (ll. 1575-1602). — To the poet who could feel to draw such a picture, ecclesiastical doctrine against that which would produce such a happiness, could have no force.

Live, the poet teaches. Live, and enjoy all that God has given. Be moderate. Love God.

(B) Just as the poet refused to allow himself to be led into the treatment of purely religious and ecclesiastical subject-matter that so limited the efforts of his

cultivated contemporaries in English; as he refused to allow himself to be drawn into any narrow and ascetic view of life, and held that all attitudes toward life had some good to offer to the man who would live sanely; so he seems consciously or unconsciously to have resisted the tendency of the learned of his day in secular poetry to select some foreign fashion to slavishly follow, or some foreign original to translate or paraphrase. From the means of expression that he found used by his contemporaries the poet adopted here and there whatever seemed best suited to the conveyance of his matter, and to the artistic success of his work; while at the same time, in every detail, he preserved his own independence and individuality.

It is true that the author of *The Owl* employed for the presentation of his matter the comparatively well-known form of the debate: but when we say that he took the suggestion for the form of his poem from current literary forms, we have said in "suggestion" almost all there is to be said definitely in the matter (cf. page lxii). — It is true, again, that the common and increasing use of the short couplet in French probably had much influence on the choice of the verse-form of *The Owl* (cf. page lxvi): yet it must be borne in mind that the tetrapody in the poem (possibly the first long poem in this metre in English) is not the French tetrapody. From the latter the poet derived merely the suggestion of the regularity and uniformity that the decaying Anglo-Saxon metre had needed. He rejected the French system of regulating the line by syllables, and applied to his work the Teutonic law of accent that

his fathers had used and that the people of England loved dearly (cf. page lxxv). — Further, it is true that the influence of the dialectics of the schoolmen and the wandering scholars of the time, is seen in the excellent logic, the admirably sustained arguments, and the unusual holding to the point, in all the poem: yet this is but an influence. The poet profited by the dialectical spirit of the time as he profited by the experiments in literary and verse form of his contemporaries. His poem is not an exercise in dialectics, nor in any way does it approach such. It is literature, whose excellence in form depends, indeed, in good part upon the influence that the author had derived directly or indirectly from the logicians of his own and former times. — Finally, the subject of the poem was not a new one. The old problem that arises in life from the apparently irreconcilable elements duty and pleasure, seriousness and joyousness, had been pondered and discussed infinitely before the 13th century. But the poet was not merely working over old material. He was thoroughly in touch with the England of his day. He had moved among the people, had shared their life, and was imbued with their spirit. He had lived in sympathy with Nature. What from these sources had come to be a part of himself, this was the material for his poem. The work grew out of the man. While the poet seems to have left the problem unsolved, we have seen that in presenting it he gave the solution as far as it could be given. That solution he had learned from the people whom he so fully felt with. His authorities were neither the declarations of the ecclesiastics nor the conclusions of

the schoolmen. They were the expressions of the wisdom and judgment of the people which in process of time had been crystallized into proverbs, some of native origin, some adapted from foreign sources to express native notions, but all fathered on the sage King Alfred, and accepted and passing from mouth to mouth at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth (cf. Note 176), as a peculiar inheritance of the English people.

The poet stands out from the rest of the writers in English of his day because of his individuality and originality in the respects that have been dwelt on. But he is still more notable because of what, in contrast with the characteristics of the work of his contemporaries, may be called the distinctly *national tone and spirit* of his work, the tone and spirit that were growing out of the amalgamation of the French and the English, and of the "learned" and the "popular" elements in the island. From the French and the Latin came directly or indirectly suggestion for the form of the poem, and perhaps suggestions for a number of details of that form. From the French he drew hints for his verse, or he was influenced by the regularity of French verse. From the French came the appreciation for the lighter graces and pleasures of life, and the sympathy for that which would appeal to the æsthetic sense, which are such marked features of the theme and the presentation of the poem. From the French came to the poet directly or indirectly much of the conception of artistic finish that he so fully realized in his work : and

as from the French nature came aptness and deftness, spontaneity, spirited dramatic conception and effortless execution, and withal very much of that arch humor that is indeed the making of the poem.¹ From the English spirit and the English character he obtained independence of attitude; a demand for freedom in theory and in practice; naturalness in plan and in effect; a sane common-sense; sound ethics and right morals; a dominant seriousness; steadfastness and devotion to higher purpose. From the learned came the logical attitude that made possible the sustained unity of the poem in whole and in details. From intellectual training in schools or from contact with influence from the schools, came the clearness of view, and the sureness and precision of presentation, that for the date are so extraordinarily evident in the poem. As Ten Brink has suggested,² the work is everywhere full of the spirit of one who but a short time before may have been a strolling clerk. Such a clerk could well have learned, as the author of *The Owl* did learn, from the people, the mingling of the two nations, those who had wrung the Charter from John, who were making and to make England; from these he could have learned the lesson that the poet had to teach, the phi-

¹ It is interesting to note that, however much the poet *may* have been acquainted with the French, the national pride of the man who speaks so contemptuously of Ireland, Galway, Scotland, and Norway (ll. 907 *et seq.*, 995-1030), and who makes not one allusion to France or the French, is shown in the fact that he uses but 41 French roots, and these in all their forms but 71 times. The list follows: *acorde*, *afoled*, *bataile*, *beste*, *certes*, *crei*, *clerc*, *cundut*, *cwesse*, *dahet*, *disputinge*, *sputing*, *fals*, *falt*, *faucun*, *flores*, *foliot*, *gelus*, *ginne*, *granti*, *graunti*, *grucching*, *ipeint*, *kanunes*, *maister*, *meoster*, *merci*, *ouerquatie*, *pes*, *pie*, *pine*, *plaid*, *plait*, *plaidi*, *pliading*, *poure*, *purs*, *rente*, *siuþ*, *sot*, *sottes*, *sothede*, *spuse*, *spusing*, *spusbruche*, *spusinghendes*, *stable*, *sure*, *schirme*, *waste*, *? fitte*, *? worre*. Words from the Latin in Anglo-Saxon, are of course not included.

² Cf. note, page xxxvii.

losophy, Life for God and for Man. In accord with the true spirit of the people already manifesting itself, the author would be a good servant of the Church in the highest sense: but he would throw off the dominance of ecclesiasticism, and would judge of life for himself from the life itself. He would rest upon experience of life and upon the judgment of the common people, rather than upon mere Church doctrine. He would live because life was good; and he would serve God in thought and deed; in the manner that sane life demanded.

The qualities that have been indicated — independence of mind and of attitude; sympathy with the lower forms of life and sympathy with man; alertness to suggestion, and capacity and readiness to utilize and adapt to the purpose in view; reverence for the deeper truths of existence; realization of the seriousness of human life, of its duties and of its glorious opportunities; and, with all this, appreciation of the humor that runs through all mortal affairs high and low; — these qualities, which with his artistic genius, his dramatic imagination, his true ear, and his accurate insight and judgment and taste in the elements of poetic effect, make the author of *The Owl and the Nightingale* the greatest poet of his age in England — these qualities in combination are generally accepted as notable distinctive characteristics of purely English literature since the actual amalgamation of the French and the English in Great Britain.

IV. THE FORM.

Among the best known and most widely cultivated forms in the great literary languages of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, is that of the Contention Poem — a class of poetry that in the Christian era has been regarded with favor and practiced with varying modifications over a territory extending from districts probably more eastern than Persia to as far west as the home of Mistress Anne Bradstreet, and during a period ranging from the date of the *Psychomachia*¹ of Prudentius (born 348 A. D.) to that of the decline of the English Masque, or in “popular” form to even a much later date.² The fundamental characteristic of the Contention Poem is indicated in the name: the work must be a verbal contest for supremacy, between two or more persons or personifications, capable or regarded as capable, of originating and carrying on a dialogue. Of this class of poetry *The Owl and the Nightingale* is the earliest extant specimen, and in many respects one of the most notable specimens, in English. The Kentish treatise on *Vices and Virtues*,³ in which a soul confesses its sins and Reason praises the Virtues, may be earlier (c. 1200); but, as is true of the Latin and later English *Body and Soul*, it is not an argument for supremacy, but a dialogue.

¹ Ed. A. Dressel, Leipzig, 1860; Johannes Bergmann, Upsala, 1897.

² E. g. 1836: cf. Bell's *Ballads and Songs of Peasantry of England*, pp. 46, 49, and note. On the Contention Poem, see Knobloch, *Die Streitgedichte im Provenzalischen und Altfranzösischen*, Breslau Diss.; Selbach, *Das Streitgedicht in der Altprovenzalischen Lyrik*, Stengel's *Ausgaben und Abhandlungen*, 57; Jeanroy, *La Grande Encyclopédie*, s. v. *débat*; et al.

³ E. E. T. S. Pub. lxxxix.

The characteristics of the form of *The Owl* may be indicated as follows:

(1) It is an epical or narrative poem in its larger plan. It has a narrative introduction, narrative transitions (with, sometimes, didactic comments growing out of the debate), and a narrative conclusion.

(2) The debate or contention proper is dramatic, narrative transitions (at times descriptive in character) or sometimes limited didactic comment, usually intervening between alternate speeches.

(3) The debate is a feigned contest : the poet invents it.

(4) The contention proper is between two contestants; but at the end a number of additional actors and one speaker are added.

(5) The contestants are not human, but birds, i. e. lower animals humanized.

(6) The debate *arises* from personalities : there is no proposing of a debatable question. The nightingale opens the contest by abusing the owl. At dusk the owl replies, and the debate follows.

(7) The debate is concerning personal matters, (a) the appearance and habits of life of the two birds; the relative merit of their song, the relative worth of their motives ; (b) the relative value to man of their song, their personal appearance, their manners and habits. Rarely creeps in matter (as in the discussion of the matter of Love) that but indirectly concerns either bird.

(8) As the topics of debate are personal, the arguments naturally are bitter and often abusive.

(9) Each of the contestants usually meets the de-

clarations of her opponent by counter argument, and then advances added assertion or argument.

(10) The arguments are frequently supported by citation of familiar popular proverbs, directly or by implication assigned to King Alfred.

(11) After the first few speeches, which consist of abuse and threats, a judge is chosen to preside over a more reasonable exposition of the merits and demerits of the birds.

(12) Through eagerness the contestants exhaust their abuse and arguments immediately after the judge is chosen and before they can betake themselves into his presence. Through the advice of the wren, the debate concludes with a decision to report the matter of the speeches to the judge, and to abide by his decree.

(13) The judge does not appear as present at the dispute, nor is his decision given. The birds fly off to present their arguments to him. That is all the reader learns of the debate, and the poet states that he knows no more.

(14) A specific person is designated as judge in such a manner as to lead to the conclusion that his name was introduced for the purpose of complimenting a friend.

(15) The use of popular proverbs (always those of sane and healthful tenor); the motives that the birds claim as inspiring their activity; the motives, attitudes, actions, habits, that they support or blame in their main arguments or in incidental illustrations and issues by the way; and the character of the few comments that the author introduces with rare tact; all these give the poem didactic force, and indicate that under all was

a more or less direct purpose on the part of the author to inculcate a broad teaching of honesty, fidelity, purity, temperance, and wisdom.

(16) The author refers to the debate with the words *plaid, plait, plaiding*. These words always apply to the contention of the birds, and not to the poem as a whole. The scribe of the Jesus MS. styles the poem *altercacio*.

(17) The poem is in short couplets.

A detailed presentation of the characteristics of the contention poems in Provençal, Latin, and Old French, in comparison with the characteristics of *The Owl*, cannot be made here. A very careful study and comparison of practically all the extant contention poems earlier than the fourteenth century in the three languages mentioned, justifies the statements that follow.

I. From the Provençal *tenson* could come only (6), (7), and after 1175 (8); from the *partimen*, (9), (10), (13), (14); from the generic term covering *partimen* and *tenson*, *plag* or *plait* (16).

From the *feigned tenson* (a contention poem after 1190 by one author, the contest imagined, and sometimes one or both of the contestants really incapable of debate) such as I. Raimbaut de Vaqueiras' *Domna tan vos ai pregada*; II. Guillem de St. Disdier's *D'una don*, etc.; III. Pierol's *Quant amors*, etc.; IV. the Monk of Montaudon's *L'autrier fui*, etc., V. his poems on the use of rouge, and VI. his *Manens e friaris*; VII. Rostang's *Bel segner deus*, etc.; VIII. Daspol's *Seinjos aujas*, etc.; IX. the Count of Provence's *Carn e*

Ongla, etc.; X. Bertran Carbonel's *Ronci, cen ves*, etc., and XI. *Si anc null tems*, etc.; XII. Gui de Cavaillo's *Mantel vil*, etc.; XIII. Raimon Escrivan's *Cata e Trabuquet*; — from this class could come (1) and (2), at times narrative introduction and slight connections, at times also slight narrative conclusion; (3); (5), at times one feigned character is a lower animal, or is inanimate or abstract or God, and once (in XIII.) there are two inanimate objects; (7), at times and limited; (8), at times and limited; (9), slight; (11), choice of judge, rare and limited; (13), judge does not appear, several cases; (14), rare and slight; (15), little outside of the Monk; (16), at times, rare. The class, but not any one poem, affords all these characteristics. Some of the poems mentioned are too late to have influenced *The Owl*, but suggest possible similar earlier poems. It is in VI. between the Rich Man and the Friar, and in XIII. between two war-machines, both probably results of the earlier Latin poems, that one finds the full narrative atmosphere and the closest approach to the general form of *The Owl*.

2. The Latin poems individually and as a class have more of the characteristics of *The Owl*, and more close similarity of characteristics. Those of the *Psychomachia* type (general combats) can have had little or no direct influence on *The Owl*, though they did undoubtedly stimulate the general use of abstract or allegorical personages and the practice of writing contentions. The *duel* poems, such as I. *Conflictus Veris et Hiemis*, II. *Dialogus inter Corpus et Animam*, III. *Disputatio inter Cor et Oculum*, IV. *Goliae Dialogus inter Aquam*

et Vinum, V. the fragment *De Conflictu Vini et Aquae*,¹ VI. *Conflictus Ovis et Lini*, VII. *De Clarevallensibus et Cluniensibus*, VIII. *De Mauro et Zoilo*, IX. *De Presbytero et Logico*, X. *De Phillide et Flora*, XI. *The Council of Love*,² have (3); (15) satiric or didactic; regularly (1), (2), slight transitions, little comment; (4), in I., IV. burst of song honors victor, in I., II., IV., IX., X. additional actors at end; (5), parties not human in I.–VI.; (6), in II.–IX.; (7), in IV.–IX., personal responsibility in II.–III.; (8), in V.–IX., limited in II.–III., moderate in IV.; (9), slight in I., VIII., not in V., much in rest; (10), few learned allusions in VII.–IX., few Bible references in IV., VI., VIII., IX.; (11), (12), judge appears without choice in III., God in IV., in VII. the poet is chosen, in VIII. no judge yet poet is present, in IX. a congregation is chosen, in XI. a Queen of Love presides and judges, in VI. choice of judge early discussed, forgotten in debate, and taken up toward end (cp. (12)) without choice, in X. Love is chosen and the matter is taken to him (cp. (13)) and decided; decision is given in III., VII., X., XI. The poems extend from 55 to 770 lines, more close to *The Owl* than the quite short Provençal poems.

3. But little influence on *The Owl*, except as possible transmitters from the Provençal, can be supposed for the North French *tenson* (little cultivated, and except in its mild character a reflex of the Provençal) or the *jeu-parti* (a reflex of the *partimen* and very popular

¹ Schmeller, *Carmina Burana*, no. 172, p. 232, Stuttgart, 1847.

² Haupt's *Zeitschrift*, vii.

after 1250), or the few *feigned tençons* with or without¹ narrative introduction. What has been said of the *Psychomachia* and the kindred Latin poems, applies to such poems dealing with general combats as *Desputoison du Vin et de l'Jaue*, *Tournoiement d'Antecrist*, *La Bataille des Vins*, *La Bataille de Karesme et de Char-nage*, *La Bataille des VII. Ars*, *Le Mariage des Sept Ars et des Sept Vertus*, *Le Mariage des Sept Ars*, *La Bataille d'Enfer et de Paradis*, etc.

It is rather to narrative poems more or less imitative of the Latin poems, such as I. *De l'Yver et de l'Esté*, II. *De Conflictu Corporis et Animae*, III. *Florance et Blanche Flor*, with the companion piece on the same theme IV. *Huélène et Eglantine*, V. *La Desputoison de la Sinagogue et de Sainte Église*, etc., that one must look for much likelihood of suggestion from the French here for the form of *The Owl*. In the poems noted one finds (1), (2), slight transitions, little comment; (3); (4), additional actors and speakers at end in III., IV.; (5), abstractions in I., II., V.; (6), personalities in I., II., V.; (7), in V., personal acts in II., (7 b) in I.; (8), in II., V., slight in I.; (9), in II., V., slight in rest; (10), Bible references slight in II., V.; (11), (12), (13), in I. at end reader is bidden judge, in III., IV. Love is chosen, parties go and present case, decision by combat of champions; (15), in II., V.; (17), in III., IV., Winter's speeches in I. It seems probable that most of these poems are of a date later

¹ Cf. *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxiii. 791; Herrig's *Archiv*, xlii. 293; Knobloch, p. 55; Jeanroy, *Orig. de la Poésie Lyrique en France*, pt. i. ch. ii.

than that assigned to *The Owl* in this edition. They may point, however, to possible similar earlier poems.

Another class of poems, perhaps dependent somewhat on Latin originals, but of a quite independent air, and in that and in their simplicity of situation and elements, and in their element of *personality* in the personages, suggesting more *The Owl*, are such poems as I. *Du Denier et de la Brebis*, II. *Le Desputoison de Charlot et Du Barbier*, III. *Marguet Convertie*, IV. *Du Plait Renart de Dammartin contre Vairen son Roncin*. In these poems are (1), (2), conclusion and slight connections in only I.; (3); (5), animate and inanimate in I., man and horse in IV.; (6); (7), in I., (7 a) in rest; (8), in II., III.; (9), in I., IV.; (11), author early is chosen and decides at end in II.; (15), in I., III.; (16), in title of IV.; (17), in I. In each of the MSS. of *The Owl* is a copy of Chardry's *Le Petit Plet*¹ (16), in 890 short couplets (17). The poem has (1), (2), introduction and slight connections; (3); (9), only in ll. 90-262; (10), *Distichs of Cato* once mentioned and alluded to a number of times; (15); (16); (17). The similarities to *The Owl* in these poems, and in the last poem, are actually slight; and those of *Le Petit Plet* are in number or extent or use not greater than those noted in several of the Latin poems; but the impressions stated at the first of this paragraph, and the existence in England of this French *Plet* of this length in couplets with these elements very early in the thirteenth century,² along with the later shorter poems

¹ Koch, *Chardry's Josaphaz*, etc., Heilbronn, 1879.

² Koch assigns it to the opening of the century: *op. cit.*, pp. xlvii.

noted above, suggest the possibility of French poems of an early period with closer resemblances to *The Owl*.

However all this may be, it must be remembered that no French or Latin or Provençal original of *The Owl* has been discovered, and that in none of these tongues has yet been found a single poem that embodies all the elements of the form of *The Owl* or uses many of the elements embodied in the manner or to the extent exhibited in *The Owl*. All the elements but (14) found in the Provençal are found in a more marked degree in the French and the Latin poems, and (14) was taken over into the French with the *jeu-parti*. It must be borne in mind that (14) is dependent upon a theory concerning the authorship of the poem, and that even if the theory is correct, it is not necessary to suppose that the poet could not himself adapt to this purpose the common element of the choosing of judge. In the French poems there are more similarities to the form of *The Owl*, and these increase in closeness and number as the form of the poems approaches that of the Latin duels. The French, however, contains at times (14), (16), and (17), which the Latin has not, (16) and (17) not occurring in a poem or class of poem with (14). It must be noted that an actual contest for supremacy is in every true *partimen*, *tenson*, and *jeu-parti* in Provençal or French, and that often in the Latin and French from Latin poems this yields place to mere dialogue.

One may decide that a French poem with all or most of the general characteristics of *The Owl*, may have afforded the poet his model, or a Latin poem with all or almost all but (14), (16), (17), may have been the

prototype. No such poem is now extant. It is improbable that the poet of *The Owl* took all the characteristics of his poem from any one source. It is not at all improbable, moreover, that some of the elements or uses of elements were original with the poet; that he had not met with them at all in reading or by hearing, though he *could* perhaps have met with them if his reading had been wide enough. Many of the characteristics are such as would easily occur to a clever man who sat down to compose a debate between the two birds (two lower animals as parties in a contention apparently occurring first in *The Owl*, be it noted). Further, it must be emphasized that what have been noted as similarities of characteristics between the French or the Latin or the Provençal poems and *The Owl*, are usually similarities in *bare fact* of the characteristic. Again, (a matter that only a careful reading of each poem can show to the student of the question) in most of the cases the embodiment or use of the characteristic is in no way similar to the embodiment or use in *The Owl*; and very commonly the prominence or extent of influence of the characteristic is quite unlike the prominence or extent in *The Owl*. Hence one may say that very often the "similarities" are really not such at all.

In the extant Provençal, Latin, and French, up to the middle of the thirteenth century never more than one of the two contestants is bird or beast.¹ Yet not only the two principals, but also all the actors in *The Owl*, and as well many of the persons in the illustrations and

¹ The champions of the ladies in *Florance et Blanche Flor* are birds.

by-incidents, are lower animals. In the poem the allusion (l. 1050 and note) to a story of a nightingale mentioned by Neckam in his *De Naturis Rerum* and by Marie de France in her *Lai de Laustic*, and the outline of the well-known fable of the Fox and the Cat (l. 809), call attention to the popularity of stories, and of descriptions of the characteristics and properties (real and assumed), of animals in England and France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Of the 12th century is Philippe de Thaon's Anglo-Norman *Physiologus*; of the 13th are Guillaume le Clerc's *Bestiare Divin*, Richard de Fournival's *Bestiare d'Amour*, and the English *Bestiary*. The last is based mostly on Theobaldus' popular Latin *Physiologus* found in MS. Harl. 3093, which afforded material also for Neckam's 12th century *De Naturis Rerum*, a work very popular in all the 13th century (cf. Note 1050). In themselves and in their transfer of matter, these works and many others of less note, with their originals, afforded acceptable material for thought to the English. — After a careful survey and study of the field, Mr. Jacobs has had no hesitation in declaring that England was "certainly the home of the Fable during that period [latter half of the twelfth century], and that it is therefore probable that some at least of the French *Ysopets* were composed" there.¹ With Herr Mall² he locates the most influential collections in England. That the Fable was particularly acceptable to the English and in current use among them, is shown outside

¹ *The Fables of Æsop, as First Printed by Caxton*, David Nutt, 1889, i., p. 182.

² *Zeitschrift für Rom. Phil.*, ix. 161-203.

of the many collections by its employment on a number of public occasions, but is indicated especially by the common occurrence of it in the ecclesiastical and secular works of the day, in sermons, and in collections of *exempla* and of anecdotes.

It is probably to these popular sources, the Fable, the Bestiary or Physiologus, and works such as Neckam's *De Naturis Rerum*, that is to be traced the influence that ultimately led to the use of animals as actors in *The Owl* and in such later animal poems (e. g. *The Thrush and the Nightingale* and *The Fox and the Wolf*,¹ Clanvowe's *Cuckow and Nightingale*, Dunbar's *The Merle and the Nightingale*, Henryson's *The Lion and the Mouse*, etc.) as were produced in England in the thirteenth and the following centuries.

V. THE VERSIFICATION.

The author of *The Owl and the Nightingale* chose for the conveyance of his matter the short rhymed couplet. For several centuries octosyllabic verse, developed from the Latin acatalectic tetrameter, had been used in short strophes by the *jongleurs*; and now for a hundred years it had been growing rapidly into favor among the French and Anglo-Norman poets. It had been used in the rhymed couplet by Philippe de Thaon in his *Bestiare*, by Benoît de St. More, Gaimar, and Wace, in their chronicles; and, partly because of its use by Crestien de Troyes, it had become a prevailing metre for the court romance. The short "popular"

¹ Hazlitt, *Remains of the Early Popular Poetry of England*, i. 50, 58.

tales, *fabliaux*, *lais*, *dits*, and (of special import here) the *débat* or *desputoison* or *estриф*, all now just beginning to flourish, were adopting the octosyllabic couplet as their favorite form. It has been indicated already (cf. page lx) that each of the MSS. in which *The Owl* is found, contains *Le Petit Plet*, a *débat* in this measure. It is not strange, then, that in the midst of the rising school of poets in the South who were all drawing their inspiration from French models, the author of *The Owl* chose for his poem a metrical form very similar to that coming into vogue for the contention poem in French.

The choice seems less strange when we observe that the "popular" poetry, the poetry of the people which the author knew so well and cherished so fondly — this was losing the form that it had inherited from the Anglo-Saxon, and was being so modified by the influence of French verse, that it was approaching closely the tetrapody. A glance at a few pages of *Lazamon's Brut*, written but a few years before *The Owl*, shows (1) the creeping in of rhyme at the ends of the two staves of the verse; (2) frequent neglect of alliteration, the great characteristic of Anglo-Saxon verse; and (3) expansion of the stave to three accents, and again to four accents. What is true here of the *Brut* is true of that expression of the "popular" wisdom, which the author of *The Owl* made the basis of his arguments and teachings, the verse that was passing from mouth to mouth through each day, the *Proverbs of Alfred* (cf. Note 176). The poet could have observed that when in the "popular" poetry all three of the modifications noted occurred in one verse of two staves, or even when but the first and

second in two successive verses, there often resulted a line very similar to that used in the French octosyllabic couplet.

Though the poet was strongly influenced by the French metre, he in no way slavishly imitated it as many of his successors in English verse were to do. As his mind was stored with the treasures of the "popular" poetry, his ears were filled with its rhythm. From the French short couplet, which demanded that the verse be of eight syllables with masculine rhyme, or of nine syllables with feminine rhyme, he obtained regularity and smoothness of rhythmical movement. From the English he adopted the Germanic law of accent, in accordance with which the verse is measured by the number of accents, without regard to the number of the unaccented syllables. Thus he allowed himself freedom to beautify and vary the rhythm of his lines by means of double anacrusis, the dactyl or anapaest, syncopation, and omission of anacrusis. Before this time, as far as we know, only the writer of the *Pater Noster*, with also, perhaps, the author of the *Eleven Pains of Hell* in the Jesus MS., had attempted what was accomplished in *The Owl*. With wonderful skill and taste, consciously or unconsciously the poet fitted the two systems together. His words retain their natural accent, and the verse is measured by this accent. Yet while he gave himself freedom to vary the rhythm of the lines where he would by the introduction or omission of unaccented syllables, the number of syllables in his line or the time taken in pronouncing them, satisfies almost invariably the ends of smoothness and regularity sought in the

French versification. In the earliest extant long English poem written in the short couplet, the poet developed in this measure a beauty of rhythmical movement and of metrical form that was unequalled until Chaucer perfected Middle English verse.

Prosody: On *Elision* and *Hiatus*, cf. Notes 6, 14, 21, 121, 161, 668, 705, 1176. — On *Contraction*, cf. Note 310. Elision of *-e* in *ne* is marked by contraction. — On *Slurring*, cf. Note 52; also Note 21. — On *Syncope* and *Apocope*, cf. Note 21.

Accent and Stress:¹ (1) In a polysyllable accent and stress fall on the root syllable.

(2) In words compounded of subst. and subst., or adj. and subst., or what were originally two nouns, the main accent and the stress fall on the first member. — In noun composition the particles *al*, *ge* (*i*, *y*), *for*, *un*, *mis*, and generally *bi*, do not bear accent or stress. *bi* is accented in *bísemere*, *bísemar*.

(3) In verb composition initial particles are not accented: e. g. *totórueþ*, *abíden*, *anhóp*.

(4) Inflectional final syllables of polysyllabic words, do not bear accent or stress.

(5) Trisyllabic words made up of (a) a dissyllabic noun plus a monosyllabic noun (e. g. *stáreblínd*, *stórrewís*), (b) an unaccented particle plus a dissyllabic verb (e. g. *abíten*, *bichérmet*, *itózen*), (c) a dissyllabic particle plus a monosyllable (e. g. *óuergán*, *únderstód*), or (d) a dissyllabic word plus a derivative syllable, or

¹ All statements made under Versification and the Notes are extracted from an exhaustive study of every verse of C and J, and a careful tabulation of results in connection with each point discussed.

three monosyllables (e. g. *cháteríng* 576, *éuening* 772, *nópelés* 747), cannot have their accentuation changed for rhythm.¹ In (a) (c) (d) the primary accent falls on the first syllable, and a secondary accent on the third, with stress on both syllables. In (b) the word accent and the stress fall on the second syllable.

(6) On accentuation of *derivative suffixes*, cf. Notes 40, 311.

(7) On *double* accentuation and stress of *dissyllables*, cf. Note 311.

(8) On *shift of accent* in dissyllables and in trisyllables, cf. Note 311.

(9) In four-syllabled words, (a) consisting of dissyllable plus monosyllable plus inflectional ending, or of dissyllable plus derivative ending plus inflectional ending (e. g. *óferhóheð*, *únderstánde*, *gálegále*, *bóldelíche*, *cháteríng*); or (b) where a determining prefix precedes an unaccented prefix of a trisyllabic word (e. g. *únihóded*, *únisóme*, *úniséle*), the first and third syllables will bear stress, and respectively primary and secondary accent.

(10) The following French derivatives are accented as marked: *canúnes* 729, *meostér* 924, *mercí* 1092, *Henrí* 1091; perhaps *bataíle* 1197, *dahét* 99, 1169, 1561, *fóliót* 868.

Metre: On the *Normal Line* with and without initial light syllable; and with and without trochaic initial foot; cf. Note 5.—On *Anacrusis*, cf. Note 359.—On *two or more unstressed syllables between two stresses*, cf. Note 21.—On *Clash of Stresses*, cf. Notes 110, 311; also Note 129.

¹ *neópelés* 1710, may be an exception.

Rhyme: The author of *The Owl* used (a) end-rhyme, (b) middle rhyme, and (c) to a slight degree initial rhyme or alliteration.

(a) On the *Couplet* and the *Quatrain* on one rhyme, cf. Note 1.—On *Masculine* and *Feminine* rhyme, cf. Note 1.—On “*Perfect*” rhyme, cf. Note 29.—On *Irregular* rhymes, cf. Note 63–64.—On “*Gliding*” rhyme, cf. Note 63–64.

(b) On *Assonance*, cf. Note 37.

(c) *Alliteration* is merely decorative, and is not used to mark organic structure. Much that appears in the poem is probably accidental. *Triple* alliteration in a kind of *kenning* occurs in 5, 1450, 1466; *double* alliteration thus, in 217, 266, 269, 524, 629, 655, 1176, 1407. *Irregular* alliteration is very common: e. g. double, 384, 386, 387, 408, 412, 476, 484, 485, 645, 671, 709, 710, etc.; triple, 75, 94, 234, 395, 543, 594, 597, etc.; quadruple, 147, 518, 1656, 1670. *sp*, *st*, *sc*, *s*, if they are regarded as alliterating, alliterate with each other and with themselves, contrary to Anglo-Saxon usage: e. g. 25, 495, 960, 1656; 18, 39, 79, 163, 282; etc. At times alliteration runs over two verses: e. g. 5, 141, 1205; 1411, 1791; 25, 145, 293, 1025, 1467; 341, 379, 631, 1451.

The Owl and the Nightingale

THE TEXT

THE readings of the MSS. are based on the following: collation of typed sheets of Wright's text with MS. Cott. by Mr. J. P. Gilson of the British Museum, and with MS. Jes. Coll. by Mrs. A. F. P. New of Oxford; re-examination of both MSS. at doubtful places; copy of MS. Cott. by Mr. Gilson, and photographs of MS. Jes. Coll.; re-examination of doubtful places by Mr. Gilson; collation of final text for MS. Cott. with MS. by Prof. Padelford. The MSS. are printed as much in facsimile as possible. Wherever a reading makes sense, it has been left unchanged. All variations from the MSS. are noted at foot of page. Abbreviated letters are italicised. Punctuation and capitalization are the editor's (exc. in C paragraph initials and *I* in l. 35; and in J paragraph initials, first letters of lines, and *N* in ll. 191, 1746, 1778, *M* 1778). Word divisions of the MSS. are observed with the following rules: All separated compounds are hyphenated; all prefixes and roots when separated are hyphenated; all compounds or original compounds, wrongly divided, are printed in brackets with the MS. forms at foot of page; two words written as one in the MS. are separated in brackets in the text, with the MS. form at foot of page; all not compounded words divided by the scribe, are printed as units in brackets with the MS. forms at foot of page, if as units or as divided they may be confused with other words; when the confusion just noted will not occur with words such as those just referred to, the words are printed as units, e. g. C 173 *pi ne*, C 175 *mi ne*, C 209 *que me*, C 699-700 *al re*, C 1294 *hi re*, where the separation is due merely to the lifting of the pen. Where corrections are found in the MSS., in the text the earliest written form is adopted; where the earliest written form does not make sense, the MS. correction (if good) is adopted in brackets with a footnote; where in the latter case the correction seems in the earliest hand, it is adopted without brackets but with footnote. All editorial corrections are bracketed, with footnotes of the MS. forms. On the numbering of the leaves of MS. Jes. Coll. see note

on page x. In C undotted *wen* is very frequent and is so written as to be in these cases undistinguishable from *thorn*. See Notes 649, 48. In a number of places *thorn* is dotted, and so is like *wen* (see Note 2). The correct letter (*thorn* or *w*) is printed where the MS. word is in itself and in its context not ambiguous; where the MS. form in itself or in its context could be ambiguous, it is bracketed with a footnote. Cæsural points in C are noted at foot of text. Those in J are so numerous that no notice has been taken of them.

The following abbreviations are used in referring to editions of the poem: Str. = Stratmann; St. = Stevenson; Wr. = Wright. Variations (usually due to error) in these editions are given only where they may illuminate.

The Owl and the Nightingale

Ich was in one sumere dale,
in one suþe diþele hale,
iherde ich holde grete tale
an hule and one niȝtingale.

MS. Cott.
Fol. 233 r, col. 1.

5 þat plait was stif & starc & strong,
sum wile softe & lud among;
an aiþer aȝen oþer sval,
& let þat wole mod ut al.

& eiþer seide of oþeres custe
10 þat alre-worste þat hi wuste:
& hure & hure of oþere[s] songe,
hi holde plaiding suþe stronge.

þe niȝtingale bi-gon þe speche
in one hurne of one [beche],

15 & sat up one vaire boȝe,
þar were abute blosme i-noȝe,
in ore waste þicke hegge,
imeind mid spire & grene segge.

Ho was þe gladur uor þe rise,
20 & song auele cunne wise:
[b]et þuȝte þe dreim þat he were

2 þ dotted. — 7 marg. pencil eiþer. — 10 alere, first e deleted. —
11 oþere. — 14 breche. — 21 het.

The Owl and the Nightingale

• Incipit altercacio inter filomenam et Bubonem.

Ich wes in one sumere dale, MS. Jes. Coll.
In one swiþe dyele hale, Fol. 229r, col. 1.

Iherde ich holde grete tale

An vle and one nyhtegale.

5 þat playd wes stif & starc & strong,

Sum hwile softe & lud am[o]ng;

And eyþer a-yeyn oþer swal,

And let þat vuele mod vt al.

And eyþer seyde of oþres custe

10 þat alre-wrste þat hi y-wuste:

& hure & hure of oþres songe,

Hi holde playding swiþe stronge.

þe [n]ihtegale bi-gon þo speke

In one hurne of one beche,

15 & sat vp one vayre bowe,

þat were abute blostme ynowe,

In ore vaste þikke hegge,

I[m]eynd myd spire & grene segge.

He wes þe gladder vor þe ryse,

20 & song a veole cunne wyse:

Bet þuhte þe drem þat he were

Latin heading in red. — 6 among, o on g. — 13 Nihtegale. —
18 IMeynd.

of harpe & pipe þan he nere,
 bet þuʒte þat he were i-shote
 of harpe & pipe þan of þrote.

25 [p]o stod on old stoc þar bi-side,
 þar þo vle song hire tide,
 & was mid iui al bi-growe:
 hit was þare hule earding-stowe.

[p]e niʒtingale hi iseʒ,
 30 & hi bihold & ouer-seʒ,
 & þuʒte wel wl of þare hule,
 for me hi halt lodlich & fule.
 ‘Vn-wiʒt,’ ho sede, ‘a-wei þu flo!
 me is þe wrs þat ich þe so.

35 I-wis for þine wle lete
 wel oft ich mine song forlete;
 min horte at-flip, & falt mi tonge,
 wonne þu art to me i-þrunge.

Fol. 233 r, col. 2.

Me luste bet speten, þane singe,
 40 of þine fule ʒoʒelinge.’

þos hule abod fort hit was eve,
 ho ne miʒte no leng bileue,
 vor hire horte was so gret
 þat wel neʒ hire fnast at-schet,
 45 & warp a word þar-after longe,
 ‘Hu þincþe nu bi mine songe?
 West þu þat ich ne cunne singe,

25, 29 rubric capital omitted, directing letter remains.—34 wrs,
 s very like e.

- Of harpe & pipe þan he nere,
 Bet þuhte þat heo were i-shote
 Of harpe & pipe þan of þrote.
- 25 þo stod on old stok þar by-side,
 þar þe vle song hire tyde,
 And wes myd iwi al bi-growe:
 Hit wes þare vle erdingstowe.
 þe [n]ihtegale hi iseyh,
 30 & hi bi-[hold] and ouer-seyh,
 & þuhte wel ful of þare vle,
 For me hi halt lodlich & fule.
 ‘Vnwyht,’ heo seyde, ‘a-vey þu fleo! Fol. 229 r,
 Me is þe wurs þat ich þe iseo. col. 2.
- 35 Iwis for þine wle lete
 Wel ofte ich my song fur-lete;
 Min heorte atflyhþ & falt my tunge,
 Hwenne þu art to me i-þrunge.
 Me luste bet speten, þane singe,
 40 Of þine fule howelynge.’
 þeos vle abod for hit wes eve,
 Heo ne myhte no leng bileue,
 Vor hire heorte wes so gret
 þat wel neyh hire fnast at-set,
 45 & warp a word þar-after longe,
 ‘Hw þynk þe nu bi [m]ine songe?
 Wenestu þat ich ne kunne singe,

29 Nihtegale. — 30 bi holdeþ. — 32 *small crook above &.* —
 46 Mine.

- þeȝ ich ne cunne of writelinge?
 Ilome þu dest me grame,
 50 & seist me [boþe tone] & schame.
 ȝif ich þe holde on mine uote,
 so hit bitide þat ich mote!
 & þu were vt of þine rise,
 þu sholdest singe an oþer wse.
 55 þe niȝtingale ȝaf answare,
 ‘ȝif ich me loki wit þe bare,
 & me schilde wit þe blete,
 ne reche ich noȝt of þine þrete:
 ȝif ich me holde in mine hegge,
 60 ne recche ich neuer what þu segge.
 Ich wot þat þu art un-milde
 wiþ hom þat ne muȝe from [þ]e schilde:
 & þu tukest wroþe & vuele
 whar þu miȝt over smale fuȝele.
 65 Vor-þi þu art loþ al fuel-kunne,
 & alle ho þe driueþ honne,
 & þe bi-schricheþ & bi-gredet,
 & wel narewe þe bi-ledet:
 & ek for-þe þe sulue mose,
 70 hire þonkes, wolde þe to-tose.
 þu art lodlich to biholde,
 & þu art loþ in monie volde:

Fol. 233 v, col. 1.

50 seist, *e* *very like c*, *cp.* 367; ho þe to ne. — 51 uote, *very like note*; *St.*, *Wr.* note. — 62 se. — 63 vuele, *very like vnele*.

- þe ich ne cunne of wrytelinge?
 Ilome þu dest me grome,
 50 & seist me boþe teone & schome.
 If ich þe heolde on myne vote,
 So hit bitide þat ich mote!
 & þu were vt of þine ryse,
 þu scholdest singe on oþer wise.'
 55 þe [n]ihtegale yaf onsware,
 'If ich me loki wiþ þe bare,
 & me schilde [w]it þe blete,
 Ne recche ich nouht of þine þrete:
 If ich me holde in myne hegge,
 60 Ne recche ich neuer hwat þu segge.
 Ich wot þat þu art vn[m]ilde
 Wiþ heom þat ne [m]uwe from þe schilde:
 And þu tukest wroþe & vuele
 Hwar þu myht ouer smale voweles.
 65 Vor-þi þu art loþ al fowel-cunne, Fol. 229 v, col. 1.
 & alle heo þe dryueþ heonne,
 & þe bi-scrycheþ & bi-gredeþ,
 & wel narewe þe by-ledeþ:
 & ek for-þe þe sulue mose,
 70 Hire þonkes, wolde þe to-tose.
 þu art lodlich to bi-holde,
 And þu art loþ in monye volde:

þi bodi is short, þi swore is smal,
 grettere is þin heued þan þu al;
 75 þin eþene boþ col-blake & brode,
 riȝt swo ho weren ipeint mid wode;
 þu starest so þu wille abiten
 al þat þu mist mid cliure smiten;
 þi bile is stif & scharp & hoked,
 80 riȝt so an owel þat is croked,
 þar-mid þu clackes[t] oft & longe,
 & þat is on of þine songe.
 Ac þu þretest to mine fleshe,
 mid þine cliures woldest me meshe.
 85 þe were i-cundur to one frogge:

* * * * *

snailes, mus, & fule wiȝte,
 boþ þine cunde & þine riȝte.
 þu sittest a-dai, & fliȝ[s]t a-niȝt,
 90 þu cuþest þat þu art on vn-wiȝt.
 þu art lodlich & un-clene,
 bi þine neste ich hit mene,
 & ek bi þine fule brode,
 þu fedest on hom a wel ful fode.
 95 Vel wostu þat hi doþ þar-inne,
 hi fuleþ hit up to þe chinne:
 ho sitteþ þar so hi bo bisne.
 þar-bi men segget a uorbisne,

73 swore, *obscure pencil letter above e*. — 81 clackes; oft,
pencil e added. — 86 omitted. — 89 fliȝt, ȝ is on a t, or ȝ t united.

- þi body is scort, þi swere is smal,
 Grettur is þin heued [þan] þu al;
 75 þin eyen beoþ colblake & brode,
 Ryht so hi weren ipeynt myd wode;
 þu starest so þu wille abyten
 Al þat þu myht myd clyure smyten;
 þi bile is stif & sarp & hoked,
 80 Riht as on ewel þat is croked,
 þar-myð þu clechest euer a-mong,
 And þat is on of þine song.
 Ac þu þretest to myne vleysse,
 Mid þine cleures woldest me [m]eysse.
 85 þe were i-cundere to one frogge
 þat sit at [m]ulne vnder cogge:
 Snayles, [m]us, and fule wihte,
 Beoþ þine cunde & þine rihte.
 þu sittest a-day, and flyhst a-niht,
 90 þu cuþest þat þu art on vnwiht.
 þu art lodlich and vnclene,
 Bi þine neste ich hit mene,
 And ek bi þine fule brode,
 þu vedest on heom [a wel] ful vode.
 95 Wel wostu þat hi doþ þar-ynne,
 Hi fuleþ hit vp to þe chynne:
 Heo sytteþ þar so hi beo bysne.
 Hwar-bi men seggeþ a vor-bysne,

74 heued ne þu. — 75 *all after þin on erasure.* — 84 Meysse. —
 86 Mulne. — 87 Mus. — 91 *defective & followed by and.* — 94
 awel.

- “[Dahet] habbe þat ilke best
 100 þat fuleþ his owe nest.”
 þat oþer ȝer a faukun bredde;
 his nest noȝt wel he ne bi-hedde:
 þar-to þu stele in o day,
 & leideþ þar-on þi fole ey. Fol. 233 v, col. 2.
 105 þo hit bi-com þat he haȝte,
 & of his eyre briddes wraȝte,
 ho broȝte his briddes mete,
 bihold his nest, iseȝ hi ete:
 he iseȝ bi one halue
 110 his nest i-fuled ut-halue.
 þe faucun was wroþ wit his bridde,
 & lude ȝal & sterne chidde,
 “Segget me, wo hauet þis i-do?
 Ov nas neuer i-cunde þar-to:
 115 hit was i-don ov aloþ [custe].
 Segge me ȝif ȝe hit wiste.”
 þo quap þat on & quad þat oþer,
 “I-wis it was ure oȝer broþer,
 þe ȝond þat haued þat grete heued:
 120 wai þat hi[t]nis þar-of bi-reued!
 Worp hit ut mid þe alre-wrste
 þat his necke him to-berste!”
 þe faucun i-lefde his bridde,
 & nom þat fule brid amidde

99 da het. — 106 wen like y, no dot; Str. w, St., Wr: y. —
 115 wiste. — 120 letter (? long s) erased after hi.

“Dehaet habbe þat ilke best Fol. 229 v, col. 2.

100 þat fuleþ his owe nest.”

þat oþer yer a faukun bredde ;

His nest nowiht wel he ne bihedde :

þar-to þu stele in o day,

& leydest þar-on þi fule ey.

105 þo hit bycom þat he hayhte,

& of his eyre briddes wrauhete,

Heo brouhte his briddes mete,

Bi-heold his nest, i-seyh hi ete :

He i-seyh bi one halue

110 His nest ifuled in þe vt halue.

þe faukun wes wroþ wiþ his bridde,

& lude yal and sturne chidde,

“ Seggeþ me hwo haueþ þis i-do ?

Eu nas neuer i-cunde þer-to :

115 Hit wes i-don eu a loþe custe.

Seggeþ me if ye hit wiste.”

þo queþ þat on and queþ þat oþer,

“ Iwis hit wes vre owe broþer,

þat yeonde þat haueþ þat grete heued :

120 Way þat he nys þar-of by-reued !

Werp hit vt myd þe vyrste

þet his nekke him to-berste ! ”

þe faukun leuede his i-bridde,

& nom þat fule brid a-mydde

- 125 & warp hit of þan wilde bowe,
 þar pie & crowe hit to-drowe.
 Her-bi men segget abi-spel,
 þeʒ hit ne bo fuliche spel,
 al so hit is bi þan un-gode
 130 þat is i-cumen of fule brode,
 & is meind wit fro monne,
 euer he cuþ þat he com þonne,
 þat he com of þan adel eye,
 þeʒ he a fro nest leie.
 135 þeʒ appel trendli fro[m] þon trowe,
 þar he & oþer mid growe,
 þeʒ he bo þar-from bi-cume,
 he cuþ wel whonene he is i-cume.' Fol. 234 r, col. 1.
 þos word a-ʒaf þe niztingale,
 140 & after þare longe tale
 he song so lude & so scharpe,
 riʒt so me grulde schille harpe.
 þos hule luste þider-ward,
 & hold hire eʒe noþer-wa[r]d,
 145 & sat to-svolle & ibolwe
 also ho hadde one frogge i-suolʒe :
 for ho wel wiste & was i-war
 þat ho song hire abisemar.
 & noþeles ho ʒa[f] andsuare,
 150 ' Whi [neltu] flon in-to þe bare,

135 fron. — 136 þar &, & deleted. — 144 wad, u altered to wen. — 145 smudge above wen. — 149 ʒas, marg. pencil f. — 150 nel tu.

125 & warp hym of þan wilde bowe,

þat pie and crowe hit to-drowe.

þer-by men seggeþ a by-spel,

þeyh hit ne beo fulliche spel,

Al so hit is bi þan vn-gode

130 þat is icumen of fule brode,

& is y-meynd wiþ freo monne,

Euer he cup þat he com þenne,

þat he com of þan adel eye,

þeyh he a freo neste leye.

Fol. 230 r, col. 1.

135 þeyh appel trendli from þe treo,

þar he and oþer myde grewe,

þeyh he beo þar-from bicume,

He cup hwenene he is i-cume.'

þeos word a-yaf þe nihtegale,

140 And after þare longe tale

Heo song so lude & so scharpe,

Ryht so me *grulde* schille harpe.

þeos vle luste þider-ward,

& heold hire eyen neþer-ward,

145 & sat to-swolle & to-bolewe

So heo hedde one frogge iswolwe :

For heo wel wiste & was i-war

þat heo song hire a bysemar.

& nabeles heo yaf ondsware,

150 ' Hwý [neltu] fleon in-to [þe] bare,

146 iswolwe, s *inserted above*. — 150 nel tu ; in to bare.

16 The Owl and the Nightingale

& sewi [w]are unker bo
Of briȝter howe, of uairur blo ?'

'No, þu hauest wel scharpe clawe,
ne kepich noȝt þat þu me clawe.

155 þu hauest cliuers suȝe stronge,
þu tuengst þar-mid so doȝ a tonge.
þu þoȝtest, so doȝ þine ilike,
mid faire worde me bi-swike.

Ich nolde don þat þu me raddest,
160 ich wiste wel þat þu me mis-raddest.

Schamie þe for þin unrede !

Vn-wroȝen is þi svikel-hede !

Schild þine svikel-dom vram þe liȝte,
& hud þat woȝe amon [g] þe riȝte.

165 [W]ane þu wilt þin unriȝt spene,
loke þat hit ne bo i-sene :

vor svike [l]-dom haued schome & hete,
ȝif hit is ope & under-ȝete.

Ne speddestu noȝt mid þine un-wrenche,
170 for ich am war & can wel blenche.

Ne helpp noȝt þat þu bo to [þ]riste :

ich wolde viȝte bet mid liste Fol. 234 r, col. 2.

þan þu mid al þine strengþe.

Ich habbe on brede & ec[h] on lengþe

151 þare, *no dot.* — 159 þa, *t inserted*; raddest, *second d deleted.* — 161 *marg. pencil* god. — 164 amon. — 165 þane, *no dot.* — 167 svike dom. — 170 war, *crook after wen.* — 171 wriste, *þ dotted.* — 174 ech, *? h altered to k.*

- And schewi hweþer vnker beo
 Of brihter hewe, of fayrur bleo?'
- 'No, þu hauest scharpe clawe,
 Ne kepe ich noht þat þu me clawe.
- 155 þu hauest clyures swiþe stronge,
 þu twengest þar-mid so doþ a tonge.
 þu þoutest, so doþ þine i-lyche,
 Mid fayre worde me biswike.
 Ich nolde don þat þu me raddest,
- 160 Ich wiste wel þat þu me mis-raddest.
 Schomye þe vor þine vnrede!
 Vn-wryen is þi swike[1] hede!
 Schild þi swike[1] dom from þe lyhte,
 And hud þat wowe a-mong þe ryhte.
- 165 Hwanne þu wilt [þin] vnriht spene,
 Loke þat hit ne beo i-sene:
 Vor swike[1] dom haueþ schome and hete, Fol.
 If hit is ope and vnder-yete. 230 r, col. 2.
 Ne spedestu nouht mid þin vn-wrenche,
- 170 For ich am war and can blenche.
 Ne helpeþ noht þat þu bo to þriste:
 Ich wolde vyhte bet myd liste
 þan þu mid al þine strengþe.
 Ich habbe on brede & ek on lengþe

162 swikehede. — 163 swikedom. — 165 þu vnriht. — 167 swikedom; hete, -e cut off.

175 castel god on mine rise :

“ Wel fīzt þat wel flīzt,” seiþ þe wise.

Ac lete we a-wei þos cheste,
vor suiche wordes boþ un-w[re]ste ;
& fo we on mid rihte dome,

180 mid faire worde & mid ysome.

þeȝ we ne bo at one a-corde,
we muȝe bet mid fayre worde,
wit-ute cheste, & bute fīzte,
plaidi mid foȝe & mid rihte :

185 & mai hure eiþer wat hi wile
mid rihte segge & mid sckile.’

þo quap þe hule, ‘ [W]u schal us seme,
þat kunne & wille riht us deme ? ’

‘ Ich wot wel,’ quap þe niȝtingale,

190 ‘ Ne þaref þar-of bo no tale.

Maister Nichole of Gulde-forde,
he is wis an war of worde :
he is of dome suþe gleu,
& him is loþ euriȝh un-þeu.

195 He wot in-siȝt in eche songe,
wo singet wel, wo singet wronge :
& he can schede vrom þe rihte
þat woȝe, þat þuster from þe liȝte.’

þo hule one wile hi bi-þoȝte,
200 & after þan þis word up-broȝte,

178 un werste, *marg. pencil cross*. — 180 ysome, *y much like*
wen. — 184 foȝe, *f very like long s*. — 187 þu, *no dot*.

175 Castel god on myne ryse :

“ Wel fyht þat wel flyhþ,” seyþ þe wise.

Ac lete [we] a-wey þeos cheste,

For suche wordes beoþ vn-wreste;

And fo we on myd rihte dome,

180 Mid fayre worde & myd some.

þeyh we ne beon at one acorde,

We mawe bet myd fayre worde,

Wiþ-vte cheste, and bute vyhte,

Playde mid soþe & mid ryhte :

185 & may vr eyþer hwat he wile

Mid rihte segge & myd skile.’

þo quað þe vle, ‘ Hwo schal vs seme,

þat cunne & wille riht vs deme?’

‘ Ich wot wel,’ quað þe nyhtegale,

190 ‘ Ne þarf þer-of beo no tale.

Mayster Nichol of Guldeuorde,

He is wis and war of worde :

He is of worde swyþe glev,

And him is loþ eurich vn-þeu.

195 He wot insyht in euche songe,

Hwo singeþ wel, hwo singeþ wronge:

And he con schede from þe rihte

þat wowe, þat þuster from þe lyhte.’

þe vle one hwile hi bihouhte,

200 And after þan þis word up-brouhte,

20 The Owl and the Nightingale

- ‘Ich granti wel þat he us deme,
 vor þeȝ he were wile breme,
 & lof him were niȝtingale,
 & oþer wiȝte gente & smale,
 205 ich wot he is nu suȝe a-coled.
 Nis he vor þe noȝt a-foled; Fol. 234 v, col. 1.
 þat he, for þine olde luue,
 me a-dun legge & þe buue :
 ne schaltu neure so him queme,
 210 þat he for þe fals dom deme.
 He is him ripe & fast-rede,
 ne lust him [nu to] none un-rede :
 nu him ne lust na more pleie,
 he wile gon a riȝte weie.’
 215 þe niȝtingale was al ȝare,
 ho hadde ilorned wel aiware :
 ‘Hule,’ ho sede, ‘seie me soþ,
 wi dostu þat un-wiȝtis doþ ?
 þu singist aniȝt & noȝt a-dai,
 220 & al þi song is waila-wai.
 þu miȝt mid þine songe a-fere
 alle þat ihereþ þine ibere :
 þu sch[ri] chest & ȝollest to þine fere,
 þat hit is grislich to ihere :
 225 hit þinche[þ] boþe wise & snepe,

207 loue, o deleted, u above. — 208 crook as for er after be. —
 211 marg. pencil cross. — 212 nuto or unto. — 221 þu miȝt on
 erasure. — 223 schirchest. — 225 þinchest.

- 'Ich graunti wel þat he vs deme, Fol. 230 v, col. 1.
 For þeyh he were hwile breme,
 & leof hym wre [n]ihtingale,
 And oþer wyhte gent & smale,
 205 Ich wot he is [nu suþe] a-coled.
 Nis he vor þe nouht afoled,
 þat he, vor þine olde luue,
 Me a-dun legge & þe a-buue:
 N[e] schaltu neuer so him queme,
 210 þat he for þe fals dom deme.
 He is nv ripe & fast-rede,
 Ne luste hym nv to non vnrede:
 Nv him ne lust namore pleye,
 He wile gon a rihte weye.'
 215 þe [n]ihtegale wes al ware,
 Heo hedde i-leorned wel i-hware:
 'Vle,' heo seyde, 'seye me soþ,
 Hwi dostu þat vnwihtes doþ?
 þu singest a-nyht & nouht a-day,
 220 And al þi song is way-laway.
 þu miht mid þine songe afere
 Alle þat hereþ þine i-bere:
 þ[u] scrichest & yollest to þine fere,
 þat hit is gryslich to ihere:
 225 Hit þincheþ boþe wise & snepe,

201 þa, t inserted above. — 203 Nihhtingale. — 205 is nu þe a
 coled. — 209 N schaltu. — 215 Nihhtegale. — 223 þ scrichest.

noȝt þat þu singe, ac þat þu wepe.
 þu flizst aniȝt & noȝt a-dai :
 þar-of ich wndri, & wel mai,
 vor eurich þing þat schuniet riȝt,
 230 hit luueþ þuster & hatiet liȝt ;
 & eurich þing þat is lof mis-dede,
 hit luueþ þuster to his dede.
 A wis word, þeȝ hit bo un-clene,
 is fele manne a muþe imene,
 235 for Alured King hit seide & wrot,
 "He schunet þat [hine] wl wot."
 Ich wene þat þu dost also,
 vor þu flizst niȝtes euer mo.
 An oþer þing me is a-wene,
 240 þu hauest a-niȝt wel briȝte sene ; Fol. 234 v, col. 2.
 bi daie þu art stare-blind,
 þat þu ne sichst ne bos ne strind.
 A-dai þu art blind oþer bisne,
 þar-bi men segget a uor-bisne,
 245 "Riȝt so hit farþ bi þan un-gode
 þat noȝt ne suþ to none gode,
 & is so ful of vuele wrenche,
 þat him ne mai no man at-prenche,
 & can wel þane þu [str]e wai,

236 schunet, t *interlined after n* ; hi ne. — 240 eyen *interlined after niȝt*. — 241 crook *above bi as for er, cp. 208*. — 242 bos, s *deleted, v above s* ; strind, st *deleted*. — 249 þurste.

Nouht þat þu singe, [ac þat] þu wepe.
 þu flyhst a-nyht and noht a-day :
 þar-of ich wundri, & wel may,
 For vych þing þat schonyeþ riht,
 230 Hit luueþ þuster & hateþ lyht ;
 & euych þing þat luueþ misdede,
 Hit luueþ þuster to his dede.
 A wis word, þeyh hit beo vn-clene,
 Is fele monne a muþe i-mene,
 235 For Alured King hit seyde & wrot,
 " He schuneþ þat hine ful wot."
 Ich wene þat þu dost al so,
 For þu flyhst nyhtes euer mo.
 [An] oþer þing me is a-wene,
 240 þu hauest a-nyht wel bryhte sene ;
 Bi daye þu art stare-blynd,
 þat þu ne syst bouh of lynd.
 A-day þu art blynd oþer bisne,
 þar-by men seggeþ a vorbisne,
 245 " Riht so hit farþ bi þan vngode
 þat nouht ne i-syhþ to none gode,
 & is so ful of vuele wrenche,
 þat him ne may no mon a-prenche,
 & con wel þene þustre way,

Fol. 230 v,
col. 2.

226 singe at þu. — 232 hit, t *erased or worn away*. — 239 &
oþer. — 246 i syhþ *in different hand*.

250 & þane briȝte lat a-wai."

So doþ þat boþ of þine cunde,
of liȝte nabbeþ hi none imunde.'

þos hule luste suþe longe,
& was of-toned suþ[e] stronge :

255 ho quap, ' þu [h]attest niȝtingale,
þu miȝtest bet hoten galegale,
vor þu hauest to monie tale.

Lat þine tunge habbe spale !

þu wenest þat þes dai [bo þin oȝe] :

260 lat me nu habbe mine þroȝe ;

bo nu stille & lat me speke,
ich wille bon of þe a-wreke.

& lust hu ich con me bitelle,
mid riȝte soþe wit-ute spelle.

265 þu seist þat ich me hude a-dai,
þar-to ne segge ich nich ne nai :

& lust ich telle þe ware-uore,
al wi hit is & ware-uore.

Ich habbe bile stif & stronge,

270 & gode cliuers scharp & longe,
so hit bi-cumeþ to hauekes cunne ;

hit is min hiȝte, hit is mi wune,
þat ich me draȝe to mine cunde,

ne mai [me] no man þare-uore schende ; Fol.

235 r, col. i.

251 cunde, dot over n. — 254 suþ, e interlined in different ink.
— 255 ho quap marked for transposition ; attest, h above in different ink. — 259 boþinoȝe. — 274 mai no.

250 & þane bryhte lat a-way."

So doþ þat beoþ of þine cunde,
Of lihte nabbeþ hi none i-munde.'

þeos vle luste swiþe longe,
& wes of-teoned swiþe stronge :

255 Heo quap, ' þu hattest [n]ihtegale,
þu [m]ihtest bet hote galegale,
Vor þu hauest to monye tale.

Let þine tunge habbe spale !

þu wenest þat þes day beo þin owe :

260 Let me nv habbe myne þrowe ;

Beo nv stille & let me speke,

Ich wile beo of þe a-wreke.

& lust hw ich con me bi-telle,

Mid rihte soþe wiþ-vte spelle.

265 þu seyst þat ich me hude a-day,

þar-to ne segge ich nyk no nay :

& lust ich telle hwer-vore,

Al hwi hit is & hware-vore.

Ich habbe bile stif & strong,

Fol. 231 r, col. 1.

270 & gode cleures scharp & longe,

So hit by-cumeþ to haukes cunne ;

Hit is myn hyhte & my [wu]ne

þat ich me drawe to mine cunde,

Ne may me no mon þar-for sende ;

255 Nihtegale. — 256 Mihtest. — 267 vore, o somewhat like a poor a. — 272 my ynne.

- 275 on me hit is wel i-sene,
 vor rihte cunde ich am so kene.
 Vor-þi ich am loþ smale foþle
 þat floþ bi grunde an bi þuuele:
 hi me bi-chermet & bi-gredeþ,
 280 & hore flockes to [m]e ledeþ.
 Me is lof to habbe reste
 & sitte stille in mine neste :
 vor nere ich neuwer no þe betere,
 [3]if ich mid chauling & mid chatere
 285 hom schende & mid fule worde,
 so herdes doþ oþer mid schit-worde.
 Ne lust me wit þe screwen chide,
 for-þi ich wende from hom wide.
 Hit is a wise monne dome,
 290 & hi hit segget wel ilome,
 þat me ne chide wit þe gidie,
 ne wit þan ofne me ne 3onie.
 At sume siþe herde [I telle]
 hu Alured sede on his spelle,
 295 " Loke þat þu ne bo þare
 þar chauling boþ & cheste 3are :
 lat sottes chide, & uorþ þu go."
 & ich am wis, & do also.
 & 3et Alured seide an oþer side,
 300 a word þat is i-sprunge wide,
 " þat wit þe fule haueþ i-mene,

280 ne, altered in later hand to me. — 284 þif. — 293 siþe,
 'later þ inserted above after þ ; itelle.

- 275 On me hit is wel i-sene,
 For rihte cunde ich am so kene.
 Vor-þi ich am loþ smale vowele
 þat fleoþ bi grunde & bi þuuele :
 Hi me bichirmeþ & bi-gredeþ,
 280 & heore flockes to me ledeþ.
 Me is leof to habbe reste
 And sitte stille in myne neste :
 Vor nere ich neuer þe betere,
 þeyh ich mid changling and myd chaterere
 285 Heom schende & myd fule worde,
 So herdes doþ oþer [m]id sit-worde.
 Ne lust me wiþ þe screwen chide,
 For-þi ich wende from heom wide.
 Hit is [a wise monne] dome,
 290 & hi hit seggeþ wel i-lome,
 þat me ne chide wiþ þe gidie,
 Ne wiþ þan ofne me ne yonie.
 At sum syþe herde I telle
 Hw Alured seyde on his spelle,
 295 " Loke þat þu ne beo þare
 þar changling beoþ & cheste vare :
 Let sottes chide, & forþ þu go."
 & ich am wis, & do al so.
 & yet Alured seyde an oþer syde,
 300 A word þat is i-sprunge wide,
 " þat wiþ þe fule haueþ i-mene,

284 chaterere *above line for lack of space.* — 286 Mid. — 289 awisemonne.

28 The Owl and the Nightingale

ne cumeþ he neuer from him cleine."

Wenestu þat haueck bo þe worse
þoʒ crowe bi-grede him bi þe mershe,

305 & goþ to him mid hore chirme
riʒt so hi wille wit him schirme?

þe hauec folʒeþ gode rede,
& flizt his wei, & lat him grede. Fol. 235 r, col. 2.

‘ ʒet þu me seist of oþer þinge,
310 & telst þat ich ne can noʒt singe,

ac al mi rorde is woning,
& to ihire grislich þing.

þat nis noʒt soþ, ich singe efne,
mid fulle dreme & lude stefne.

315 þu wenist þat ech song bo grislich,
þat þine pipinge nis ilich.

Mi stefne is [bold] & noʒt un-orne,
ho is ilich one grete horne,
& þin is ilich one pipe,

320 of one smale wode un-ripe.

Ich singe bet þan þu dest:
þu chaterest so doþ on Irish prost.

Ich singe an eue ariʒte time,
& soþþe won hit is bed-time,

325 þe þridde siþe ad middel-niʒte:

307 *a deleted after hauec.* — 308 *him, i altered to e.* — 312
hire, i- interlined. — 317 *blod, marg. later bold.* — 320 *wode,*
after o later e interlined. — 322 *prost, after r later e interlined.*

Ne cumeþ he neuer from him clene."

Wenestu þat hauek beo þe wrse Fol. 231 r, col. 2.

þe crowe bi-grede him bi þe mersche,

305 & goþ to him myd heore chyrme

Riht so hi wille wiþ him schirme?

þe hauek foleweþ gode rede;

He flyhþ his wey, & let hi grede.

‘[Y]et þu me seyst of oþer þinge,

310 & tellest þat ich ne can nouht singe,

Ac al my reorde is wonyng,

And to i-here gryslych þing.

þat nis nouht soþ, ich singe efne,

Mid fulle dreme & lude stefne.

315 þu wenest þat eoch song beo grislich,

þat þine pipinge nis ilich.

Mi stefne is bold & nouht vn-orne,

Heo is ilich one grete horne,

& þin is iliche one pype,

320 Of one smale weode vnripe.

Ich [singe] bet þan þu dest:

þu chaterest so doþ on Yris prest.

Ich singe an efne a ryhte time,

& seþþe hwenne hit is bed-time,

325 þe þridde syþe a middel-nyhte:

30 The Owl and the Nightingale

- & so ich mine song a-diȝte
 wone ich iso arise vorre
 oþer dai-rim oþer dai-sterre.
 Ich do god mid mine þrote,
 330 & warni men to hore note.
 Ac þu singest alle longe niȝt,
 from eue fort hit is dai-liȝt,
 & eure seist þin o song
 so longe so þe niȝt is long;
 335 & eure croweþ þi wrecche crei,
 þat he ne swikeþ niȝt ne dai.
 Mid þine pipinge þu a-dunest
 þas monnes earen þar þu wunest,
 & makest þine song so un-wrþ
 340 þa[t] me ne telþ of þar noȝ[t] wrþ.
 Eurich murȝþe mai so longe ileste,
 þat ho shal liki wel un-wreste: Fol. 235 v, col. 1.
 vor harpe, & pipe, & fuȝeles songe,
 mislikeþ, ȝif hit is to long.
 345 Ne bo þe song neuer so murie,
 þat he ne shal þinche wel un-murie
 ȝef he ilesteþ ouer un-wille:
 so þu miȝt þine song aspille.
 Vor hit is soþ, Alured hit seidde,
 350 & me hit mai ine boke rede,

333 seist, long s later altered to ?l. — 339 wrþ, þ smudged. —
 340 þat, noȝt, t's interlined in later hand. — 349 seidde, first d
 deleted. — 350 ine, no dot.

& so ich myne songe a-dihte
 Hwenne ich i-seo a-rise veorre
 Oþer day-rewe oþer day-steorre.
 Ic do god myd myne þrote,
 330 And warny men to heore note.
 Ac þu singest alle longe nyht,
 From eue þat hit is day-liht,
 & euer lesteþ þin o song
 So longe so þe nyht is long;
 335 & euer croweþ þi wrecche crey,
 þat he ne swikeþ nyht ne day.
 Mid þine pipinge þu adunest
 þas monnes eren þar þu wunest,
 & makest þi song so vnwiht
 340 þat me ne telleþ of þe nowiht.
 Eurych mureþe may so longe leste,
 þat heo schal liki wel vnwreste:
 For harpe, & pipe, & foweles song,
 Mislikeþ, if hit is to long.
 345 Ne beo þe song ne so murie,
 þat he ne sal þinche vnmurie
 If he ilesteþ ouer vnwille:
 So þu myht þi song aspile.
 For hit is soþ, Alured hit seyde,
 350 & me hit may in boke rede,

Fol. 231 v, col. 1.

“Eurich þing mai losen his godhede
mid unmeþe & mid ouer-dede.”

Mid este þu þe miȝt ouer-quatie,
& ouer-fulle makeþ wlatie:

355 an eurich mureȝþe mai a-gon,
ȝif me hit halt eure forþ in on,
bute one, þat is Godes riche,
þat eure is svete & eure i-liche:
þeȝ þu nime euere o[f] þan lepe,
360 hit is eure ful bi hepe.

Wunder hit is of Godes riche,
þat eure spenþ & euer is iliche.

‘Ȝut þu me seist an oþer shome,
þat ich [am] on mine eȝen lome,
365 an seist, for þat ich flo bi niȝte,
þat ich ne mai iso [bi liȝte].
þu liest! on me hit is isene
þat ich habbe gode sene:
vor nis non so dim þusternesse,
370 þat ich euer iso þe lasse.
þu wenest þat ich ne miȝte iso,
vor ich bi daie noȝt ne flo.
þe hare luteþ al dai,
ac nopeles iso he mai.
375 Ȝif hundes urneþ to him-ward,

357 *erased letter before godes*. — 359 *op.* — 364 *an, n deleted, dash (for m) over a*. — 366 *biȝte*. — 367 *liest, e very like c*.

Eurich þing may lesen his godhede
Mid vnmeþe and ouerdede."

Mid este þu þe maist ouer-quatie,
& ouer-fulle makieþ wlatie :

355 & euerich mureþe may a-gon,
If me hit halt euer in on,
Bute one, þat is Godes riche,
þa[t] euer is swete & euer iliche :
þeyh þu nyme [euer] of þan lepe,
360 Hit is euer ful by hepe.

Wunder hit is of Godes ryche,
þat euer spenþ & euer is iliche.

‘ Yet þu me seyst an oþer schome,
þat ich a[m] on [m]yne eye lome,
365 & seyst, for þat ich fleo bi nyhte,
þat ich ne may i-seo bi lyhte.
þu liest ! on me hit is i-sene
þat ich habbe gode sene :
Vor nys no so dym þesternesse,
370 þat ich euer i-seo þe lesse.

þu wenest þat ich ne mwe iseo,

Vor ich bi daye nouht ne fleo. Fol. 231 v, col. 2.

þe hare luteþ al day,

Ac noþeles i-seo he may.

375 If hundes eorneþ to him-ward,

He gengþ wel suiþe awai-ward, Fol. 235 v, col. 2.
 & hokep papes sviþe narewe,
 & haueþ mid him his blenches ȝarewe,
 & hupþ & stard suþe coue,

380 an secheþ papes to þe groue :
 ne sholde he uor boþe his eȝe,
 so don ȝif he þe bet ni-seȝe.
 Ich mai ison so wel so on hare,
 þeȝ ich bi daie sitte an dare.

385 þar aȝte men [boþ] in worre,
 an fareþ boþe ner an forre,
 an ouer-uareþ fele wode,
 an doþ bi niȝte gode node,
 ich folȝi þan aȝte manne,

390 an flo bi niȝte in hore banne.
 Þe niȝtingale in hire þoȝte
 at-hold al þis, & longe þoȝte
 wat ho þar-after miȝte segge :
 vor ho ne miȝte noȝt alegge

395 þat þe hule hadde hire ised,
 vor he spac boþe riȝt an red.
 An hire of-þuȝte þat ho hadde
 þe speche so for uorþ iladde,
 an was oferd þat hire answare

400 ne wrþe noȝt ariȝt i-fare.

Ac nopeles he spac boldeliche,

376 last letter smudged. — 385 boþe. — 387 wode, e above
 after o in different ink. — 388 node, e above after o in different ink.

He gencheþ swiþe away-ward,
 & hocheþ paþes swiþe narewe,
 & haueþ mid him blenches yarewe.
 He hupþ & start swiþe cove,
 380 & secheþ paþes to þe groue :
 Ne scholde he vor bo his eye,
 So do if he þe bet ne iseye.
 Ich may iseo so wel so on hare,
 þeyh ich bi daye sytte a dare.
 385 þar auhte men beoþ in worre,
 & fareþ boþe neor & feorre,
 & ouer-vareþ veole þeode,
 & doþ bi nyhte gode neode,
 Ich folewi þane ahte manne,
 390 & fleo bi nyhte in heore barme.'
 þe nyhtegale in hire þouhte
 At-heold al þis, & longe þouhte
 Hwat heo þar-after myhte segge :
 Vor heo ne myhte noht a-legge
 395 þat þe vle hedde hire i-seyd,
 Vor ho spak boþe riht & red.
 & hire ofþuhte þat heo hadde
 þe speche so feor uorþ iladde,
 & wes aferd þat hire answare
 400 Ne wrþe nouht a-riht i-vare.
 Ac noþeles heo spak boldeliche,

- vor he is wis þat hardeliche
 wiþ is uo berþ grete ilete,
 þat he uor areþe hit ne forlete :
 405 vor suich worþ bold 3if þu flizste,
 þat wle flo 3if þu vicst ;
 3if he isip þat þu nart are3,
 he wile of bore wrchen bare3.
 & for-þi, þe3 þe niztingale
 410 were a-ferd, ho spac bolde tale. Fol. 236 r, col. 1.
 ‘ [H]ule,’ ho seide, ‘ wi [dostu] so ?
 þu singest a winter wola-wo :
 þu singest so doþ hen asnowe,
 al þat ho singeþ hit is for wowe.
 415 A wintere þu singest wroþe & 3omere,
 an eure þu art dumb a sumere.
 Hit is for þine fule niþe,
 þat þu ne mi3t mid us bo bliþe,
 vor þu for-bernest wel ne3 for onde
 420 wane ure blisse cumeþ to londe.
 þu farest so doþ þe ille,
 evrich blisse him is un-wille :
 grucching & luring him boþ rade,
 3if he isop þat men boþ glade.
 425 He wolde þat he ise3e
 teres in evrich monnes e3e :

405 suich, i *deleted*. — 406 isvicst, is *deleted*. — 408 ? bore3,
 ? o altered to a — 411 rubric þ, direction is h ; do stu. — 416
 an, later d.

- Vor heo is wis þat hardeliche
 Wiþ his fo berþ grete i-lete,
 [þ]at he for arehþe hit ne for-lete :
 405 Vor suych worþ bold if þu flyhst,
 þat wile fleo if þu [ne] swykst ;
 If he isihþ þat þu [n]art areh, Fol. 232r, col. 1.
 He wile of bore wurche bareh.
 & for-þi, þey [þe] nyhtegale
 410 Were a-ferd, heo spak bolde tale.
 ‘ [Vle],’ heo seyde, ‘ hwi dostu so ?
 þu singest a wynter wolawo :
 þu singest so doþ hen a snowe,
 Al þat heo singeþ hit is for wowe.
 415 A wintre þu singest wroþe & yomere,
 & euer þu art dumb a sumere.
 Hit is for þine fule nyþe,
 þat þu ne myht myd vs be bliþe,
 Vor þu forbernest neyh for onde
 420 Hwenne vre blisse cumeþ to londz.
 þu farest so doþ þe ille,
 Euer-ich blisse him is vnwille :
 Grucching & luryng him beoþ rade,
 If he iseoþ þat men beoþ glade.
 425 He wolde þat he iseye
 Teres in eueriche monnes eye :

404 Hwat. — 406 þa, t inserted above ; þu swykst. — 407
 art. — 409 þey nyhtegale, marg. þe. — 411 þvle, direction
 is þ.

38 The Owl and the Nightingale

ne roȝte he þeȝ flockes were
imeind bi toppes & bi here.

Al so þu dost on þire side :

430 vor wanne snov liþ þicke & wide,

an alle wiȝtes habbeþ sorȝe,

þu singest from eue fort amorȝe.

Ac ich alle blisse mid me bringe :

ech wiȝt is glad for mine þinge,

435 & blisseþ hit wanne ich cume,

& hiȝteþ aȝen mine kume.

þe blostme ginneþ springe & sprede,

boþe ine tro & ek on mede.

þe lilie mid hire faire wlite

440 wolcumeþ me þat þu hit wte,

bit me mid hire faire blo

þat ich shulle to hire flo.

þe rose also mid hire rude,

þat cumeþ ut of þe þorne wode, Fol. 236 r, col. 2.

445 bit me þat ich shulle singe

vor hire luue one skentinge :

& ich so do þurȝ niȝt & dai,

þe more ich singe þe more I mai,

an skente hi mid mine songe,

450 ac noþeles noȝt ouer-longe ;

wane ich iso þat men boþ glade,

431 an, *later d.* — 437 þe blostme *on erasure.* — 441 bit, *t altered to d.* — 446 one one, *former one deleted* — 449 an, *later d.*

- Ne rouhte [h]e þeyh flockes were
 Imeynd bi toppes & bi here.
 Al so þu dost on þire syde :
 430 For hwanne snouh liþ þikke & wide,
 & alle wihtes habbeþ sorewe,
 þu singest from eue to amorewe.
 Ac ich mid me alle blisse bringe :
 Ech wiht is glad for myne þinge,
 435 & blesseþ hit hwenne ich cume,
 & hihteþ a-yeyn myne cume.
 þe blostme gynneþ springe & sprede,
 Boþe in treo & ek in mede.
 þe lilie myd hire fayre [w]lite
 440 Welcomeþ me þeyh þu hit wite,
 Bid me myd hire fayre bleo
 þat ich schulle to hire fleo.
 þe rose also myd hire rude,
 þat cumeþ of þe þorne wode,
 445 Bit me þat ich schulle singe
 For hire luue one skentyng :
 & ich so do þureh nyht & day,
 þe more ich singe þe more ich may,
 & skente hi myd myne songe,
 450 Ac noþeles nouht ouer-longe ;
 Hwenne ich iseo þat men beoþ glade,

Fol. 232 r, col. 2.

ich nelle þat hi bon to sade ;
 [w]an is i-do vor wan ich com,
 ich fare agen & do wisdom.

455 Wane mon hoʒeþ of his sheue,
 an falewi cumeþ on grene leue,
 ich fare hom & nime leue :
 ne recche ich noȝt of winteres reue.

Wan ich iso þat cumeþ þat harde,
 460 ich fare hom to min erde,
 an habbe boþe luue & þonc
 þat ich her com & hider swonk.

[W]an min erende is i-do,
 sholde ich bi-leue? nai, [w]arto?
 465 vor he nis noþer ȝep ne wis,
 þat longe abid þar him nod nis.'

þos hule luste, & leide an hord
 al þis mot, word after word,
 an after þoȝte hu he miȝte

470 ansvere uinde best mid riȝte :
 vor he mot hine ful wel bi-þenche,
 þat is a-ferd of plaites wrenche.

'þv aishest me,' þe hule sede,
 'wi ich a winter singe & grede.

475 Hit is gode monne i-wone,
 an was from þe worlde frome,
 þat ech god man his frond i-cnowe,

453 þan, *no dot.* — 463 þan, *no dot.* — 464 leue.; þarto, *no dot.* — 469 an, *later d.*

- Ich nelle þat hi beon to sade;
 Hwenne is i-do for hwan ich com,
 Ich vare ayeyn & do wisdom.
 455 Hwanne mon howiep of his sheue,
 & salewi cumeþ of grene leue,
 Ich fare hom & nyme leue:
 Ne recche ich nouht of wyntres teone.
 Hwanne ich i-seo þat cumeþ [þat harde],
 460 Ich fare hom to myn erde,
 & habbe boþe luue & þonk
 þat ich her com & hider swonk.
 Hwanne myn erende is i-do,
 Scholde ich bi-leue? nay, hwar-to?
 465 Vor he nys noþer yep ne wis,
 þat longe abid þar him no need is.
 þeos vle luste, & leyde an hord
 Al þis mot, word after word,
 And after þouhte hw heo myhte
 470 Onswere vynde best myd rihte:
 Vor he mot ful wel him bi-þenche,
 þat is aferd of playtes wrenche.
 ‘þv ayssest me,’ þe vle seyde,
 ‘Hwi ich a winter singe & grede.
 475 Hit is [gode monne] y-wune,
 & was from þe worlde frume,
 þat ech god mon his frend i-knowe, Fol. 232 v, col. 1.

an blisse mid hom sume þrowe, Fol. 236 v, col. 1.
in his huse at his borde,

480 mid faire speche & faire worde.

& hure & hure to Cristes-masse,
[w]ane riche & poure, more & lasse,
singep cundut niȝt & dai,
ich hom helpe what ich mai.

485 & ek ich þenche of oþer þinge,
þane to pleien oþer to singe.

Ich habbe herto gode ansuare
an-on iredi & al ȝare :

vor sumeres-tide is [al to w]lonc,

490 an doþ mis-reken monnes þonk :

vor he ne recþ noȝt of clen-nesse,
al his þoȝt is of gol-nesse :

vor [none] dor no leng nabideþ,
ac eurich upon oþer rideþ :

495 þe sulue stottes ine þe stode,
boþ boþe wilde & mere-wode.

& þu sulf art þar-among,
for of golnesse is al þi song,
an aȝen þet þu wlt teme,

500 þu art wel modi & wel breme.

Sone so þu hau [e] st itrede,

481 erasure after first hure. — 482 þane, no dot. — 486 pleien, en on smudge. — 489 alto þlonc, no dot. — 493 no ne. — 495 stottes, first t like c, cp. 594; ine, no dot. — 499 an, later d. — 501 haust, e inserted in different ink before s.

& blissi myd heom sume þrowe,
 In his huse at his borde,
 480 Mid fayre speche & fayre worde.
 & hure & hure to Cristes-masse,
 Hwenne riche & poure, more & lasse,
 Singeþ cundut nyht & day,
 Ich heom helpe hwat ich may.
 485 & ek ich þenche of oþer þinge,
 þane to pleye oþer to singe.
 Ich habbe her-to god onsware
 Anon i-redi and al ware:
 Vor sumerestyde is al wlonk,
 490 & doþ mysreken monnes þonk:
 Vor he ne rekþ noht of clennesses,
 Al his þouht is of golnesse:
 Vor none dor no leng nabideþ,
 Ac euerich vp oþer rideþ:
 495 þe sulue stottes yne þe stode,
 Beþ boþe wilde and marewode.
 & þu sulf art þar-among,
 Vor of golnysse is al þi song,
 & ayeyn [þet þu wilt teme],
 500 þu art wel modi & wel breme.
 Sone so þu hauest i-trede,

ne miȝtu leng a word i-queȝe,
 ac pipest al so doȝ a mose,
 mid chokeringe mid steune hose.

505 Ȝet þu singst worse þon þe hei-sugge,
 [þ]at flizȝ bi grunde among þe stubbe:
 wane þi lust is a-go,
 þonne is þi song a-go also.

A sumere chorles a-wedeȝ

510 & uor-crempeȝ & uor-bredeȝ :

hit nis for luue noȝeles,

ac is þe chorles wode res ;

Fol. 236 v, col. 2.

vor wane he haueȝ i-do his dede,

i-fallen is al his bold-hede,

515 habbe he is tunge under gore,

ne last his luue no leng more.

Al so hit is on þine mode :

so sone so þu sittest abroad,

þu for-lost al þine wise.

520 Al so þu farest on þine rise :

wane þu hauest i-do þi gome,

þi steune goȝ [anon] to shome.

Ac [w]ane niȝtes cumeȝ longe,

& b[r]ingeȝ forstes starke an stronge,

525 þanne erest hit is isene

502 i queȝe, later d above. — 506 ȝat. — 508 erasure after song. — 513 crook above wen or þ. — 515 after is long s above. — 516 later crook for er after leng. — 522 a non. — 523 þane, no dot. — 524 bingheȝ, r interlined in different ink.

- Ne myht þu leng a word i-queþe,
 Ac pipest al so doþ a mose,
 Mid cokeringe mid stefne hose.
- 505 Yet þu singest wrs̃ þan þe hey-sugge,
 Þæt flyhþ bi grunde a-mong þe stubbe :
 Hwenne þi lust is a-go,
 Þenne is þi song ago al so.
 A sumere chorles [awaydeþ]
- 510 & uorcrempeþ & uorbredeþ :
 Hit nys for luue noþeles,
 Ac is þeos cherles wode res ;
 Vo[r] hwanne he haueþ i-do his dede,
 Ifalle is al his boldhede,
- 515 Habbe he is tunge vnder gore,
 Ne last his luue no leng more.
 Al so hit is on þine mode :
 So sone so þu sittest a brode,
 Þu for-leost al þine wise.
- 520 Al so þu varest on þine ryse :
 Hwenne þu hauest i-do þi gome,
 Þi stefne goþ [anon] to schome.
 Ac hwenne nyhtes cumeþ longe,
 & bryngeþ forstes starke & stronge,
- 525 þanne erest hit is i-sene

Fol. 232 v, col. 2.

war is þe snelle, [w]ar is þe kene.

At þan harde me mai auinde

[w]o geþ forþ, wo liþ bi-hinde.

Me mai i-son at þare node,

530 [w]an me shal harde wike bode,

þanne ich am snel, & pleie & singe,

& hiȝte me mid mi skentinge :

of none wintere ich ne recche,

vor ich nam non a-svnde wrecche.

535 & ek ich frouri uele wiȝte

þat mid hom nabbed none miȝtte :

hi boþ hoȝ-fule & uel arme,

an secheþ ȝorne to þe warme ;

oft ich singe uor hom þe more

540 for lutli sum of hore sore.

Hu þincþ þe ? artu ȝut i-nume ?

[Artu] mid riȝte ouer-cume ? '

'Nay, nay,' sede þe niȝtingale,

'þu shalt ihere anoþer tale :

545 ȝet nis þos speche ibroȝt to dome.

Ac bo wel stille, & lust nu to me : Fol. 237 r, col. 1.

ich shal mid one bare worde

do þat þi speche [wurþ] for-worþe.'

'þat nere noht riȝt,' þe hule sede,

550 'þu hauest bi-cloped al so þu bede,

526 second war, no dot. — 528 first wen, no dot. — 530 þan, no dot. — 538 an, later d. — 541 inune, n altered to m by ? orig. hand. — 542 ar tu. — 548 þat, deleted þat follows ; wrht.

- Hwar is þe snelle, hwar þe kene.
 At þan harde me may a-vynde
 Hwo goþ forþ, hwo lyþ bi-hynde.
 Me may i-seon at þare neode,
 530 Hwan me schal harde wike beode,
 þanne ich am snel, & pleye & singe,
 & hyhte me myd my skentinge :
 Of none wyntre ich ne recche,
 Vo[r] ich nam non a-swunde wrecche.
 535 & ek ich froueri fele wihte
 þat myd heom nabbeþ none [m]ihte :
 Hi beoþ houhful & wel arme,
 And secheþ yorne to þen warme ;
 Ofte ich singe for hem þe more
 540 For lutly sum of heore sore.
 Hw þinkþ þe ? [artu yet inome] ?
 [Artu] myd rihte ouer-cume ?
 ‘Nay, nay,’ seyde þe [n]ihtegale,
 ‘þu schalt i-here on oþer tale :
 545 Yet nis þeos speche ibroht to dome. Fol. 233 r,
 Ac be stille, and lust nv to me : col. 1.
 Ich schal mid one bare worde
 Do þat þi speche wrþ for-wurþe.’
 ‘þat nere noht riht,’ þe vle seyde,
 550 ‘þu hauest bi-cleped al so þu bede,

526 þe, e much like v, cp. 539. — 534 Vo. — 536 Mihte. —
 539 þe, e much like v. — 541 ar tu inome, inome in later hand.
 — 542 Ar tu. — 543 Nihtegale.

an ich þe habbe i-ziue ansuare.
 Ac ar we to unker dome fare,
 ich wille speke to-ward [þ]e
 al so þu speke to-ward me;
 555 an þu me ansuare 3if þu miȝt.
 Seie me nu, þu wrecche wiȝt,
 is in þe eni oþer note
 bute þu hauest schille þrote?
 þu nart noȝt to non oþer þinge,
 560 bute þu canst of chateringe:
 vor þu art lutel an un-strong,
 an nis þi reȝel no-þing long.
 Wat dostu godes among monne?
 Na mo þe deþ a w[re]cche wranne.
 565 Of þe ne cumeþ non oþer god,
 bute þu gredest suich þu bo wod:
 an bo þi piping ouer-go,
 ne boþ on þe craftes namo.
 Alured sede, þat was wis,
 570 he miȝte wel, for soþ hit is,
 "Nis no man for is bare songe
 lof ne wrþ noȝt suþe longe:
 vor þat is a for-worþe man
 þat bute singe noȝt ne can."
 575 þu nart bute on for-worþe þing:

553 þe, þ on m. — 555 þu on erasure; ansuare, second a deleted, e above in different ink. — 561, 562 an, later d. — 564 mo, later re above; wercche. — 574 gan, g deleted, ? orig. c above.

And ich þe habbe iyue onswere.
 Ac are we to vnker dome fare,
 Ich wile speke toward þe
 Al so þu speke toward me ;
 555 & þu me onswere if þu myht.
 Sey me nu, þu wrecche wiht,
 Is in þe eny oþer note
 Bute þu hauest schille þrote ?
 Þu nart nouht to non oþer þinge,
 560 Bute þu canst of chateringe :
 Vor þu art lutel and vnstrong,
 & nys þi ryel nowiht long.
 Hwat dostu godes a-mong monne ?
 Na mo þene doþ a wrecche wrenne.
 565 Of þe ne cumeþ non oþer god,
 Bute þu gredest swich þu be wod :
 & beo þi piping ouer-go,
 Ne beoþ on þe craftes na mo.
 Alured seyde, þat wes wis,
 570 He myhte wel, for soþ hit is,
 “ Nis nomon for his bare songe
 Leof ne wrþ noht swiþe longe :
 Vor þat is o fur-wrþe man
 þat bute singe naht ne can.”
 575 Þu nart bute o fur-wrþe þing :

on þe nis bute chatering.

þu art dim an of fule howe,
an pinchest a lutel soti clowe.

þu nart fair, no þu nart strong,

580 ne þu nart picke, ne þu nart long : Fol. 237 r, col. 2.

þu hauest imist al of fair-hede,
an lutel is al þi god-eðe.

An oper þing of þe ich mene,

þu nart vair ne þu nart clene.

585 Wane þu cūmest to manne haje,

þar þornes boþ & ris i-draȝe,

bi hegge & bi picke wode,

þar men goþ oft to hore node,

þar-to þu draȝst, þar-to þu wnest,

590 an oper clene stede þu schunest.

[W]an ich flo niȝtes after muse,

I mai þe uinde ate rum-huse;

among þe wode, among þe netle,

þu sittest & singst bihinde þe setle :

595 þar me mai þe ilomest finde,

þar men worpeþ hore bi-hinde.

Ȝet þu at-uitest me mine mete,

an seist þat ich fule wiȝtes ete.

Ac wat etestu, þat þu ne liȝe,

600 bute atter-coppe & fule uliȝe ?

an wormes, ȝif þu miȝte finde

577, 582 an, *later d.* — 591 þan, *no dot.* — 594 setle, *t very like c, cp. 495.*

- On þe nys bute chaterýng.
 þu art dym & of fule heowe,
 & þínchest a lytel sotý clewe.
 þu nart fayr, ne þu nart strong, Fol. 233 r, col. 2.
 580 Ne þu nart þikke, ne þu nart long :
 þu hauest ymyst of fayrhede,
 & lutel is þi godhede.
 An oþer þing of þe ich mene,
 þu [n]art feyr ne þu nart clene.
 585 Hwanne þu cumest to monne hawe,
 þar þornes beoþ & ris i-drawe,
 Bi hegge & bi þikke weode,
 þar men goþ to heore neode,
 þar-to þu draust, [þar-] to þu wenst,
 590 & oþer clene stude þu schunest.
 Hwanne ich fleo nyhtes after muse,
 Ich may þe vinde at þe rum-huse ;
 Among þe wede, among þe netle,
 þu syttest & singst bi-hinde [þe] seotle :
 595 þar me þe may ilomest fynde,
 þar men worpeþ heore by-hinde.
 Yet þu at-witest me myne mete,
 & seyst þat ich fule wyhtes etc.
 Ac hwat etestu, þat þu ne lye,
 600 Bute atter-coppe & fule vlye ?
 & wurmes, if þu myht fynde

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among þe uolde of harde rinde ?

Ȝet ich can do wel gode wike,

vor ich can loki manne wike:

605 an mine wike boþ wel gode,

vor ich helpe to manne uode.

Ich can nimen mus at berne,

an ek at chirche ine þe derne:

vor me is lof to Cristes huse,

610 to clansi hit wiþ fule muse,

ne schal þar neure come to

ful wiȝt, ȝif ich hit mai iuo.

An ȝif me lust one mi skentinge

to wernen oþer wnienge,

Fol. 237 v, col. 1.

615 ich habbe at wude tron wel grete,

mit þicke boȝe no-þing blete,

mid iui grene al bi-growe,

þat eure stont i-liche iblowe,

an his hou neuer ne uor-lost,

620 wan hit sniuw ne wan hit frost.

þar-in ich habbe god ihold,

a winter warm a sumere cold.

Wane min hus stont briȝt & grene,

of þine nis no-þing isene.

625 Ȝet þu me telst of oþer þinge,

of mine briddes seist gabbinge,

þat hore nest nis noȝt clene.

608 an, *later d.* — 612 *deleted do after mai.* — 619 an, *later d.*

- Among þe volde of harde rynde ?
 Yet ich can do wel gode wike,
 For ich can loki monne wike:
 605 & mine wike beoþ wel gode,
 For ich helpe to monne vode.
 Ich can nyme [m]us at berne,
 & ek at chireche in þe derne:
 For me is leof to Cristes huse,
 610 To clansi hit wiþ fule [m]use,
 Ne schal þar neuer come to
 Ful wiht, if ich hit may i-vo.
 & if me lust on my skenting
 To wernen oþe[r] wunying,
 615 Ich habbe at wode treon grete,
 Mid þikke bowe noþing blete,
 Mid iui grene al bi-growe,
 þat euer stont iliche iblowe,
 & his heou neuer ne uorleost,
 620 Hwanne hit snywe ne [hwanne hit] frost.
 þar-inne ic habbe god ihold,
 A wintre warm a sumere cold.
 þane myn hus stont briht & grene,
 Of þine nys nowiht isene.
 625 Yet þu me telst of oþer þinge,
 Of myne briddes seyst gabbinge,
 þat heore [nest] nys nouht clene.

Fol. 233 v, col. 1.

- Hit is fale oþer wiȝte i-mene:
 vor hors a stable, & oxe a stalle,
 630 boþ al þat hom wule þar falle.
 An lutle children in þe cradele,
 boþe chorles an ek apele,
 boþ al þat in hore ȝoeþe
 þat hi uor-leteþ in hore duȝeþe.
 635 Wat! can þat ȝongling hit bi-hede?
 ȝif hit mis-deþ, hit mod nede:
 a uor-bisne is of olde i-wrne,
 [þ]at node makeþ old wif urne.
 An ȝet ich habbe an oþer andsware:
 640 wiltu to mine neste uare,
 an loki hu hit is i-diȝt?
 ȝif þu art wis lorni þu miȝst:
 mi nest is holȝ & rum amidde,
 so hit is softest mine bridde.
 645 Hit is broiden al abute,
 vrom þe neste uor wiþ-ute:
 þarto hi god to hore node,
 ac þat þu menest ich hom for-bode.
 We nimeþ ȝeme of manne bure,
 650 an after þan we makeþ ure:
 men habbet, among oþer i-wende,
 a rum-hus at hore bures ende,
 vor þat hi nelleþ to uor go,

Fol. 237 v,
 col. 2.

637 *uo bisne*, ? *orig.* & *inserted*. — 638 *þat*, *þ* *dotted*. — 642
miȝst on attached piece of vellum.

- Hit is fale oþer wihte imene :
 Vor hors a stable, & oxe a stalle,
 630 Doþ al þat heom wile þar valle.
 & lutle childre in þe cradele,
 Boþe cheorles & ek aþele,
 Doþ al þat in heore youhþe
 þat hi uor-leteþ in heore duhþe.
 635 Hwat ! can þat yongling hit bihedæ ?
 Yf hit mys[d]eþ, hit mot nede :
 A vorbisne is of olde iwurne,
 þat neode makeþ old wif eorne.
 & yet ich habbe an oþer onswere :
 640 Wiltu to myne neste vare,
 & loki hw hit is i-diht ?
 If þu art wis leorný þu mist :
 Mi nest is holeuh & rum amidde,
 So hit is softest myne bridde.
 645 Hit is ibroyde al a-bute,
 Vrom þe nestæ ueor wiþ-vte :
 þar-to hi goþ to heore neode,
 Ac [hwat] þu menest ich heom for-bode. Fol. 233
 [W]e yeme nymeþ of manne bure, , col. 2.
 650 & after þan we makieþ vre :
 Men habbeþ a-mong oþre iwende,
 A rum-hus at heore bures ende,
 Vor þat hi nelleþ to veor go,

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an mine briddes doþ al so.

655 Site nu stille, chaterestre :

nere þu neuer ibunde uastre ;

her-to ne uindestu neuer andsware.

Hong up þin ax, nu þu miȝt fare !'

þe niȝtingale at þisse worde

660 was wel neȝ ut of rede i-worþe,

an þoȝte ȝorne on hire mode

ȝif ho oȝt elles under-stode,

ȝif ho kuþe oȝt bute singe,

þat miȝte helpe to oþer þinge.

665 Herto ho moste and-swere uinde,

oþer mid alle bon bi-hinde :

an hit is suþe strong to fiȝte

aȝen soþ & aȝen riȝte.

He mot gon to al mid ginne,

670 þan þe horte boþ on [w]inne :

an þe man mot on oþer segge,

he mot bi-hemmen & bi-legge,

ȝif muþ wiþ-ute mai bi-wro

þat me þe horte noȝt ni-so :

675 an sone mai a word mis-reke

þar muþ shal aȝen horte speke ;

an sone mai a word mis-storte

þar muþ shal speken aȝen horte.

Ac noþeles ȝut upe þon,

660 letter erased after neȝ. — 670 wen, no dot. — 679 noþe-
les, ȝut, þ, ȝ, smudged.

& myne briddes doþ al so.

655 Syte nv stille, chaterestre :

Nere þu neu^{er} ibunde vastre ;

Her-to ne vyndestu neu^{er} answe^re.

Hong up þin ax, nv þu miht fare !'

þe [n]ihtegale at þisse worde

660 Was wel neyh ut of rede iworþe,

& þouhte yorne on hire mode

Yf heo ouht elles vnder-stode,

If heo cuþe ouht bute singe,

þat myhte helpe to oþer þinge.

665 Her-to heo moste answe^re vynde,

Oþer mid alle beon bi-hinde :

& hit is [swiþe] strong to vyhte

Ayeyn soþe & ayeyn rihte.

He mot gon to al mid gynne,

670 Hwan þe horte beoþ on [w]inne :

& þe man mot oþer segge,

He mot bi-hemme & bi-legge,

If muþ wiþ-vte may bi-wreo

þat me þe horte nouht ni-seo :

675 & sone may a word mys-reke

þar muþ schal ayeyn horte speke ;

& sone may a word mys-sturte

þar muþ schal speke ayeyn horte.

Ac [noþeles hyet] upe þon,

659 Nihtegale. — 665 vynde, i altered to y. — 667 is strong.
— 670 þinne, þ or wen. — 679 noþeles þ hyet.

680 her is to red wo hine kon :

vor neu~~e~~r nis wit so kene

so [w]ane red him is awene.

Fol. 238 r, col. 1.

þanne erest kumed his 3ep-hede

wone hit is alre-mest on drede ;

685 for Aluered seide of olde quide,

an 3ut hit nis of horte islide,

‘ Wone þe bale is alre-hecst,

þonne is þe bote alre-necst : ’

vor wit west among his sore,

690 an for his sore hit is þe more.

Vor-þi nis neuere mon redles

ar his horte bo witles :

ac 3if þat he forlost his wit,

þonne is his red-purs [al to-] slit ;

695 3if he ne kon his wit at-holde,

ne uint he red in one uolde.

Vor Alrud seide þat wel kuþe,

eure he spac mid soþe muþe,

‘ Wone þe bale is alre-hecst,

700 þanne is þe bote alre-nest. ’

þe ni3tingale al hire ho3e

mid rede hadde wel bito3e,

among þe harde, among þe to3te,

ful wel mid rede hire bi-þo3te,

680 her *very like* het. — 682 þane, *no dot* ; awene, *wen very like y*. — 686 an sut 3ut, sut *deleted*. — 688 *erasures after* þonne and is. — 694 alto.

680 Her is to red hwo hyne con :

Vor *neuer* nys wit so kene

So hwanne red him is a wene.

þanne erest cumeþ his yephede Fol. 234 r, col. 1.

Hwenne hit is alremest on drede ;

685 For Alured seyde of olde quide,

& hyet hit nis of horte islide,

‘ Hwenne þe bale is alre-hekst,

þenne is þe bote alre-nest : ’

Vor [w]it [w]est a-mong his sore,

690 & for his sore hit is þe more.

Vor-þi nis *neuer* mon redles

Ar his horte beo witles :

Ac if he fur-leost his wit,

þenne is his red-purs al to-slyt ;

695 If he ne con his wit at-holde,

N[e] vynt he red in none volde.

Vor Alured seyde þat wel cuþe,

Euer he spak mid soþe muþe,

‘ Hwenne þe bale is alre-hekst,

700 þenne is þe bote alre-nexst. ’

þe [n]ihtegale al [hire howe]

Mid rede hadde wel bi-towe,

Among þe harde, among þe towehte,

Ful wel myd rede hire bi-þouhte,

689 yit yest. — 696 N vynt. — 701 þe Nihtegale al hit, *rest omitted*. — 703 towehte, hte *above line for space*.

705 an hadde andsuere gode i-funde
among al hire harde stunde.

‘[H]ule, þu axest me,’ ho seide,
‘þif ich kon eni oþer dede
bute singen in sume tide,

710 an bringe blisse for & wide.

Wi axestu of craftes mine?

Betere is min on þan alle þine,
betere is o song of mine muþe,
þan al þat eure þi kun kuþe:

715 an lust, ich telle þe ware-uore.

Wostu to wan man was ibore? Fol. 238 r, col. 2.

To þare blisse of houene-riche,
þar euer is song & murþe iliche:
þider fundeþ eurich man

720 þat eni þing of gode kan.

Vor-þi me singþ in holi-chirche,
an clerkes ginneþ songes wirche,
þat man i-þenche bi þe songe
wider he shal, & þar bon longe;

725 þat he þe murþe ne uor-þete,

ac þar-of þenche & bi-þete,
an nime 3eme of chirche-steuene
hu murie is þe blisse of houene.

Clerkes, munekes, & kanunes,

730 þar boþ þos gode wicke-tunes,

- 705 & hedde onswere god i-funde
 Among alle hire harde stunde.
 ‘[U]le, þu axest me,’ heo seyde,
 ‘[I]f ich con eny oþer dede
 Bute syngen in sume tyde,
 710 & bringe blisse veor & wyde.
 Hwy axestu of craftes myne?
 Beter is myn on þan alle þine,
 Beter is o song of myne muþe,
 þan al þat [evre] þi kun kuþe:
 715 & lust, ich telle þe hwar-vore.
 Wostu to hwan mon wes i-bore?
 To þare blisse of heueryche,
 þar euer is song & [m]urehþe i-lyche: Fol. 234 r,
 þider fundeþ euer-ich man col. 2.
 720 þat eny þing of gode can.
 For-þi me syngeþ in holy-chireche,
 & clerekes gynneþ songes wrche,
 þat mon y-þenche bi þe songe
 Hwider he shal, & þar ben longe;
 725 þat he þe murehþe ne vor-yete,
 Ac þar-of þenche & bi-ge[te],
 & nyme yeme of chirche-stefne
 Hw [m]urie is þe blisse of heuene.
 Clerekes, [m]unekes, & canunes,
 730 þar beoþ þos gode wike-tunes,

707, 708 initials omitted. — 714 þat þi. — 718 Murehþe. —
 726 gethe. — 728 Murie. — 729 Munekes.

ariseþ up to midel-niȝte,
 an singeþ of þe houene-liȝte :
 an prostes upe londe singeþ,
 wane þe liȝt of daie springeþ.

735 An ich hom helpe wat I mai,
 ich singe mid hom niȝt & dai,
 an ho boþ alle for me þe gladdere,
 an to þe songe boþ þe raddere.

Ich warni men to here gode
 740 þat hi bon bliþe on hore mode,
 an bidde þat hi moten iseche
 þan ilke song þat euer is eche.
 Nu þu miȝt, hule, sitte & clinge ;
 her-among nis no chateringe :

745 ich graunti þat [w]e go to dome
 to-fore þe [sulfe Pope] of Rome.
 Ac abid ȝete, no-þe-les,
 þu shalt ihere an oþer [w]es :
 ne shaltu, for Engelsonde,

750 at þisse worde me at-stonde. Fol. 238 v, col. 1.

Wi at-uitestu me mine un-strengþe,
 an mine ungrete, & mine unlengþe,
 an seist þat ich nam noȝt strong,
 vor ich nam noþer gret ne long ?

755 Ac þu nost neuwer wat þu menst,
 bute lese wordes þu me lenst :

Ariseþ vp to middel-nyhte,
 & singeþ of þon heuene-lyhte :
 & preostes vpe londe singeþ,

* * * * *

- 735 & ich heom helpe hwat ic may,
 Ich singe myd hem nyht & day,
 & heo beoþ alle for me þe gladdere,
 & to þe songe beoþ þe raddure.
 Ich warny men to heore gode
 740 þat hi beon blyþe on heore mode,
 & bidden þat hi moten i-seche
 þat ilche song þat euer is eche.
 Nu þu myht, vle, sitte and clynge ;
 Her among nys no chateringe :
 745 Ich graunti þat þu go to dome
 To-vore þe sulte Pope of Rome.
 Ac a-bid yete, nopeles,
 þu schalt a-byde on oþer [bles]:
 Ne schaltu, vor Engelonde,
 750 At þisse worde me at-stonde.
 Hwy at-witestu me myne vnstrengþe,
 & myne vngrete, & myn vnlengþe,
 & sayst þat ich am nouht strong,
 Vor ic nam noþer gret ne long ? Fol. 234 v, col. 1.
 755 Ac þu nost neuer hwat þu menest,
 Bute lese wordes þu me lenest :

734 omitted. — 748 bles in later hand. — 751 me, e much like
 v, cp. 539.

64 The Owl and the Nightingale

for ich kan craft, & ich kan liste,
an [þ]are-uore ich am þus þriste.

Ich kan wit & song mani eine,
760 ne triste ich to non oþer maine :
vor soþ hit is þat seide Alured,
“Ne mai no strengþe azen red.”

Oft spet wel a lute liste,
þar muche strengþe sholde miste :
765 mid lute strengþe þurȝ ginne,
castel & burȝ me mai i-winne.

Mid liste me mai walle felle,
an worpe of horsse kniȝtes snelle.

Vuel strengþe is lutel wurþ,

770 * * * * *
 * * * * *

ac wisdom naueþ non euening.

An hors is strengur þan [a mon];

ac for hit non i-wit ne kon,

775 hit berþ on rugge grete semes,
an draȝþ bi-uore grete temes,
an þoleþ boþe ȝerd & spure,
an stont iteid at mulne dure.

An hit deþ þat mon hit hot :

780 an for þan þat hit no wit not,

758 bare, þ dotted. — 759 very like mam eine, *Wr.*, *St.*, *Str.*
manteine. — 763 lute or litte, no dot. — 770, 771 omitted; smudge
on marg. to ? call attention to omission. — 773 amon. — 774 gon
deleted before kon.

- For ic kan craft, & ic kan lyste,
& þar-fore ic am þus þriste.
Ich kan wit & song mony eine,
760 Ne triste ic to non oþer mayne :
Vor soþ hit is þat seyde Alured,
“Ne may no strengþe a-yeyn red.”
Oft spet wel a lute lyste,
þar muche strengþe solde myste :
765 Mid lute strengþe þureh ginne,
Castel & bureh me may winne.
Mid liste me may walles felle,
& werpe of horse knyhtes snelle.
Vuel strengþe is lutel wrþ,
770 Ac wisdom ne wrþ neuer vnwrþ :
þu myht iseo þurh alle þing,
þat wisdom naueþ non euening.
An hors is strengur þan a mon ;
Ac for hit non iwit ne kon,
775 Hit berþ on rugge græte semes,
& drahþ bi sweore græte temes,
& þoleþ boþe yerd & spure,
& stont i-teyed at mulne dure.
& hit doþ þat mon hit hot :
780 & for þan þat hit no wit not,

ne mai his strenþe hit i-shilde
 þat hit nabuþ þe lutle childe.
 Mon deþ, mid strengþe & mid witte,
 þat oþer þing nis non his fitte.

785 þe; alle strengþe at one were,
 monnes wit ȝet more were : Fol. 238 v, col. 2.

vor þe mon mid his crafte,
 ouer-kumep al orþliche shafte.

Al so ich do mid mine one songe

790 bet þan þu al þe ȝer longe :
 vor mine crafte men me luuieþ,
 vor þine strengþe men þe shunieþ.

Telstu bi me þe wurs for þan
 þat ich bute anne craft ne kan ?

795 Ȝif tueie men goþ to wraslinge,
 an eiþer oþer faste þringe,
 an þe on can swenges suþe fele,
 an kan his wrenches wel for-hele,
 an þe oþer ne can sweng but anne,

800 an þe is god wiþ eche manne,
 an mid þon one leiþ to grunde
 anne after oþer a lutle stunde,
 [w]at þarf he recche of a mo swenge,
 [w]one þe on him is swo genge ?

805 þ[u] seist þat þu canst fele wike,

790 þu, *on erasure*. — 794 kan, *ȝ c altered to k*. — 803 þat,
no dot; þarf, *þ dot in different ink*. — 804 þone, *no dot*. — 805
 þe.

- Ne may his strengþe hit i-schilde
 þat h[it] nabuhþ þe lutle childe.
 Mon doþ, mid strengþe & mid witte,
 þat oþer þing nys non his fitte.
 785 þey alle strengþe at one [w]ere,
 Monnes wit yet more were :
 Vor þe mon myd his crafte,
 Ouercumeth al eorþliche shafte. Fol. 234 v, col. 2.
 Al so ic do myd myne one songe
 790 Bet þan þu alle yer longe :
 Vor myne crafte men me luuyeth,
 Vor þine strengþe men þe schunyeþ.
 Telstu bi me þe wrs for þan
 þat ic bute enne craft ne kan ?
 795 If twey men goþ to wrastlinge,
 & eyþer oþer vaste þringe,
 & þe on can swenges swiþe fele,
 & kan his wrenches wel for-hele,
 & þe oþer ne can sweng bute onne,
 800 & þe is god wiþ eche manne,
 & myd þan one leyþ to grunde
 Anne after oþe[r] a lutle stunde,
 Hwat þarf he recche of [a mo] swenge,
 Hwenne þe on him is so genge ?
 805 þ[u] seyst þat þu canst fele wike,

782 h nabuhþ. — 785 yere. — 799 onne, altered to anne. —
 802 oþe. — 803 amo. — 805 þe.

ac euer ich am þin unilike.

Do þine craftes alle to-gadere,

ȝet is min on horte betere.

Oft [w]an hundes foxes driueþ,

810 þe kat ful wel him sulue liueþ,

þeȝ he ne kunne wrench bute anne.

þe fo[x] so godne ne can nanne,

þe[3] he kunne so uele wrenche,

þat he wenþ eche hunde at-prenche.

815 Vor he can papes riȝte & woȝe,

an he kan hongi bi þe boȝe,

an so for-lost þe hund his fore,

an turnþ aȝen eft to þan more.

þe uox kan crope bi þe heie,

820 an turne ut from his forme weie, Fol. 239 r, col. 1.

an eft sone kume þar-to :

þonne is þe hundes smel for-do ;

he not, þur[3] þe imeinde smak,

weþer he shal auorþ þe abak.

825 ȝif þe uox mist of al þis dwole,

at þan ende he cropþ to hole :

ac napeles mid alle his wrenche,

ne kan he hine so bi-þenche,

þeȝ he bo ȝep an suþe snel,

830 þat he ne lost his rede uel.

þe cat ne kan wrench bute anne,

809 þan, *no dot.* — 812 for. — 813 þe. — 819 kan, *c altered to k.* — 823 þurs. — 824 *before bak ? orig. a interlined.*

- Ac euer ich am þin vnyliche.
 Do þine craftes alle to-gadere,
 Yet is myn on heorte betere.
 Ofte hwan hundes foxes driueþ,
 810 þe kat ful wel him sulue liueþ,
 þeh he ne cunne wreynch bute anne.
 þe fo[x] so godne ne can nanne,
 þey he cunne so vele wrenche,
 þat he weneþ eche hunde at-prenche.
 815 Vor he can paþes rihte and wowe,
 & he can hongi bi þe bowe,
 & so vor-lest þe hund his fore,
 & turnþ eft a-yeyn to þe more.
 þe fox can crepe by þe heye,
 820 & turne vt from his forme weye,
 & eft sone cume þar-to :
 þenne is þes hundes smel for-do; Fol. 235 r, col. 1.
 He not, þurh þe [m]eynde smak,
 Hweþer he schal vorþ þe abak.
 825 If þe uox miste of al þis dwele,
 At þan ende he creophþ to hole :
 Ac napeles myd al his wrenche,
 Ne can he hine so biþenche,
 þey he beo yep & swiþe snel,
 830 þat he ne leost his rede vel.
 þe kat ne can wrench bute anne,

noþer bi dune ne bi uenne :
 bute he kan climbe suþe wel,
 þar-mid he wereþ his greie uel.

835 Al so ich segge bi mi solue,
 betere is min on þan þine twelue.²

‘Abid! abid!’ þe ule seide,
 ‘þu gest al to mid swikel-eðe :
 alle þine wordes þu bileist

840 þat hit þincþ soþ al þat þu seist ;
 alle þine wordes boþ i-slied,
 an so bisemed an biliked,
 þat alle þo þat hi a-uoþ,
 hi wenep þat þu segge soþ.

845 Abid! abid! me shal þe ȝene
 [w]u hit shal wrþe wel i-sene
 þat þu hauest muchel iloȝe,
 wone þi lesing boþ un-wroȝe.

þu seist þat þu singist mankuȝne,

850 & techest hom þat hi fundieþ horne
 vp to þe songe þat eue ilest :
 ac hit is alre wnder mest,
 þat þu darst liȝe so opeliche.

Wenest þu hi bringe so liȝt-liche

Fol. 239 r, col. 2.

855 to Godes riche al singinge?

Nai, nai, hi shulle wel a-uinde
 þat hi mid longe wope mote
 of hore sunnen bidde bote,

- Noþer bi dune ne bi venne:
 Bute he can clymbe swiþe wel,
 þar-myð he wereþ his greye vel.
 835 Al so ich segge bi my seolue,
 Beter is myn on þan þine twelue.
 ‘Abid! abid!’ þe vle seyde,
 ‘þu gest al to mid swikel-hede:
 Alle þine wordes þu bileyst
 840 þat hit þinkþ soþ þat þu seyst;
 Alle þine wordes beoþ i-sliked,
 & so biseme[d] and bilike[d],
 þat alle heo þat hi auoþ,
 Hi wenepþ þat þu segge soþ.
 845 Abid! abid! me schal þe yene!
 Nu hit schal wrþe wel i-sene
 þat þu hauest muchel i-lowe,
 Hwenne þi lesing beoþ vnwrowe.
 þu seist þat þu singest mon-cunne,
 850 & techest heom þat hi fundep heonne
 Vp to þe songe þat euer i-last:
 Ac hit is alre wndre mest,
 þat [þu] darst lye so opeliche.
 Wenestu hi bringe so lyhtliche
 855 To Godes riche al singinde?
 Nay, nay, hi schule wel avynde Fol. 235 r, col. 2.
 þat hi myð longe wope mote
 Of heore sunnen bidde bote,

ar hi mote euer kume þare.

- 860 Ich rede þi þat men bo ȝare,
 an more wepe þane singe,
 þat fundeþ to þan houen-kinge :
 vor nis no man wit-ute sunne.
 Vor-þi he mot, ar he wende honne,
 865 mid teres an mid wope betē,
 þat him bo sur þat er was swete.
 þar-to ich helpe, God hit wot !
 Ne singe i[c]h hom no foliot :
 for al me song is of longinge,
 870 an imend sum-del mid woninge,
 þat mon bi me hine bi-þenche
 þat he groni for his un-wrenche ;
 mid mine songe ich [hine] pulte,
 þat he groni for his gulte.
 875 Ȝif þu gest her-of to ~~disparaginge~~,
 ich wepe bet þane þu singe :
 ȝif riȝt goþ forþ, & abak wrong,
 betere is mi wop þane þi song.
 þeȝ sume men bo þurȝut gode,
 880 an þurȝut clene on hore mode,
 ho [m] longeþ honne noþeles.
 þat boþ her, [w]o is hom þeȝ :
 vor þeȝ hi bon hom solue iborȝe,

868 ih. — 869 a song, a *deleted*. — 872, 874 groni, *no dot* ;
Wr., *St.* grom. — 873 hi ne. — 874 *cf.* 872 ; ghe, g *deleted*. —
 877 forþ, þ *smudged*. — 881 hon. — 882 þo, *no dot*.

- Ar hi mote euer cume þare.
 860 Ich rede þi þat men beo ware,
 & more wepe þane singe,
 þat fundeþ to þan heuene-kynges :
 For nys no mon wiþ-vten sunne.
 For-þi he mot ar he wende heonne,
 865 Mid teres & myd woþe bete,
 þat him beo sur þat er was swete.
 þar-to ich helpe, God hit wot !
 Ne singe ich heom no foliot :
 Vor al my song is of longinge,
 870 And ymeynd sum-del myd woninge,
 þat mon bi me hine biþenche
 þat he grony for his vnwrenche ;
 Mid myne songe ich hine [pulte],
 þat he grony for his gulte.
 875 If þu gest her-of to disputinge,
 Ich wepe bet þan þu singe :
 If riht goþ forþ, & abak wrong,
 Betere is my wop þan þi song.
 þeyh summe men beon þurhut gode,
 880 & þurhut clene on heore mode,
 Heom longeþ heonne noþeles.
 þat beoþ her, wo is hom þes :
 Vor þeyh hi beo heom selue iborewe,

hi ne soþ her no-wiȝt bote sorwe.

885 Vor oþer men hi wepeþ sore,
an for hom biddeþ Cristes ore.

Ich helpe monne on eiþer halue,
mi muþ haueþ tweire kunne salue :

Fol. 239 v,
col. 1.

þan gode ich fulste to longinge,

890 vor [w]an hi [m] longeþ, ich him singe;

an þan sunfulle ich helpe al-swo,

vor ich him teche [w]are is wo.

Ȝet ich þe Ȝene in oþer wise :

vor [w]ane þu sittest on þine rise,

895 þu draȝst men to fleses luste,

þat willeþ þine songes luste.

Al þu for-lost þe murȝþe of houene,

for þar-to neuestu none steuene :

al þat þu singst is of gol-nesse,

900 for nis on þe non holi-nesse,

ne wened na man for þi pipinge

þat eni preost in chir[ch]e singe.

Ȝet I þe wulle an oder segge,

ȝif þu hit const ariht bilegge :

905 [wi] nultu singe an oder þeode,

þar hit is muchele more neode ?

þu neauer ne singst in Ir-londe,

ne þu ne cumest noȝt in Scotlonde.

890 þan, *no dot* ; hin. — 891 *orig.* ? al so, o *altered* to wen and *o added*. — 892 þare, *no dot*. — 894 þane, *no dot*. — 902 chirgce, *cg run together, c perhaps to displace g*. — 905 þi, *wen no dot*.

- Hi ne seop her nowiht bute serewe.
 885 Vor oper men hi wepeþ sore,
 & for heom biddeþ Cristes ore.
 Ich helpe monne on eyþer halue,
 Mi [m]uþ haueþ tweire kunne salue :
 þan gode ich fulste to longinge,
 890 Vor hwenne him longeþ ic him singe ; Fol. 235 v,
 & þan sunfulle ic helpe al-so, col. 1.
 Vor ic him teche hwar is wo.
 Yet ic þe yene on oper wise :
 Vor hwenne þu sittest on þine rise,
 895 þu draht men to fleyses luste,
 þat wileþ þine songes luste.
 Al þu vorleost þe [m]urehþe of heuene,
 For þar-to nauestu none steuene :
 Al þat þu singest is of golnesse,
 900 For nys on þe non holynesse,
 Ne weneþ no mon for þi pipinge
 þat eny preost in chirche singe.
 Yet ic þe wile on oper segge,
 If þu hit const ariht bilegge :
 905 Hwi nultu singe an oper þeode,
 þa[r] hit is muchele more neode ?
 þu neuere ne singest in Irlande,
 Ne þu ne cumest in Scotlonde.

888 Mub. — 898 Murehþe ; heuene, ne *above line for space*.
 — 906 þat, t dotted, r *above*.

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Hwi nultu fare to Nore-weie ?

910 *an* singin men of Gala-weie ?

þar beoð men þat lutel kunne
of songe þat is bi-neoðe þe sunne.

Wi nultu þare preoste singe,
an teche of þire writelinge,

915 *an* wisi hom mid þire steuene
hu engeles singeð ine heouene ?

þu farest so doð an ydel wel
þat springeþ bi burne þa [t] is snel,
an let for-drue þe dune,

920 & floh on idel þar adune.

Ac ich fare boþe norþ & soþ :
in eauer-euch londe ich am cuuþ ; Fol. 239 v, col. 2.
east & west, feor & neor,

I do wel faire mi meoster,

925 *an* warni men mid mine bere,
þat þi dweole song heo ne forlere.

Ich wisse men mid min[e] songe,
þat hi ne sunegi no-wiht longe ;

I bidde hom þat heo iswike,

930 þat heom seolue ne bi-swike :
for betere is þat heo wepen here,
þan elles hwar to beon deoulene fere.?

910 a' for an. — 916 ine, no dot. — 917 y very like wen. —
918 þar, r and t, or abbreviation, confused. — 919 a' for an. —
923 west. . . — 924 mi, no dot. — 927 min, e interlined, different
ink. — 932 deoulene, first e perhaps o altered.

- Hwi nultu vare to Norweye?
 910 & singen men of Galeweye?
 þar beoþ men þat litel kunne
 Of songe þat is vnder sunne.
 Hwi nultu þare preoste singe,
 & teche of þire writelinge,
 915 & wisi heom myd þire stefne
 Hw engles singeþ in þe heuene?
 þu farest so doþ on yde[1] wel
 þat springeþ bi burne þat is snel,
 & let for-drue þe dune,
 920 & flohþ [an ydel] þar a-dune.
 Ac ich fare norþ and souþ:
 In euer-ich londe ich am cuþ;
 East & west, souþ & norþ,
 I do wel fayre my mester,
 925 & warny men mid myne bere,
 þat þi dwele song heo ne forle[r]e.
 Ich wisse men myd myne songe,
 þat hi ne sunegi [nowiht] longe;
 Ich bidde heom þat heo iswike,
 930 þat heom seolue ne bi-swike:
 For betere is þat heo wepe here,
 þan elles hwar beo deouele yuere.'

Fol. 235 v, col. 2.

917 yde. — 920 anydel, i changed to y, or y to i. — 926 forlete.
 — 928 now iht.

- þe niȝtingale was igremet,
 an ek heo was sum-del of-chamed,
 935 for þe hule hire at-witen hadde
 in hwucche stude he sat an gradde,
 bi-hinde þe bure, among þe wede,
 þar men goð to here neode;
 an sat sum del, & heo bi-þohte,
 940 an wiste wel on hire þohte
 þe wrappe binimeþ monnes red.
 For hit seide þe king Alfred,
 ‘Sel[d]e endeð wel þe lope,
 an selde plaideð wel þe wrope.’
 945 For wrappe meinþ þe horte blod
 þat hit floweþ so wilde flod,
 an al þe heorte ouer-geþ,
 þat heo naueþ no þing bute breþ,
 an so for-leost al hire liht,
 950 þat heo ni siþ soð ne riht.
 þe niȝtingale hi under-stod,
 an ouer-gan lette hire mod:
 he mihte bet speken a sele,
 þan mid wrappe wordes deale.
 955 ‘[H]ule,’ heo seide, ‘lust nu hider:
 þu schalt falle, þe wei is slider. Fol. 240 r, col. 1.
 þu seist ich fleo bi-hinde bure:

936 gadde, r interlined, perhaps orig. hand. — 941 binimeþ,
 no dots. — 943 sele. — 950 siþ, no dot. — 955 þule, rubric þ for
 H. — 956 falle . .

- þe [n]ihtegale wes a-gromed,
 & ek sum-del of-schomed,
 935 For þe vle hire at-witen hedde
 In hwiche stude ho sat & gradde,
 Bi-hinde þe bure, a-mong þe wed,
 þar men gon to heore ned;
 & sat sum del, & ho biþouhte,
 940 & wiste wel on hire þouhte
 þe wrappe bi-nymen monnes red.
 For hit seyde þe king Alured,
 ‘Selde enden wel þe [lope],
 & selde playden wel þe wrope.’
 945 For wrappe meyn þe heorte blod
 þat hit flowen so wilde flod,
 & al þe heorte ouer-geþ,
 þat heo naen na þing bute breþ,
 & so uorleost al his lyht,
 950 þat ho ne syh þe soþ ne riht.
 þe nyhtegale hi vnderstod,
 & auer-gan lette hire mod:
 He myhte bet speken i-sele,
 þan myd wrappe wordes dele.
 955 [‘Vle,’ heo] seyde, ‘lust nu hider:
 þu schalt falle, þi wey is slider.
 þu seyst ich fleo bi-hinde bure:

933 Nihtegale. — 943 lo followed by first two strokes of w dotted, with þe next after. — 955 þe vle seyde, *marg. at bottom* þe nystegale, *faint*. — 957 ich altered to Ich.

- hit is riht, þe bur is ure ;
 þar lauerd liggeþ & lauedi,
 960 ich schal heom singe & sitte bi.
 Wenstu þat uise men forlete
 for fule venne, þe rihte strete ?
 ne sunne þe later shine,
 þe; hit bo ful ine nest þine ?
 965 Sholde ich for one hole brede,
 forlete mine rihte st[e]de,
 þa[t] ich ne singe bi þe bedde,
 þar louerd haueþ his loue ibedde ?
 Hit is mi riht, hit is mi laze,
 970 þar to þe herst ich me draze.
 Ac zet þu zelpst of þine songe,
 þat þu canst zolle wroþe & stronge,
 an seist þu uisest man-kunne,
 þat hi bi-wepen hore sunne.
 975 Solde euch mon wonie & grede
 riht suich hi weren un-lede,
 solde hi zollen al so þu dest,
 hi mihte oferen here brost.
 Man schal bo stille, & nozt grede ;
 980 he mot bi-wepe his mis-dede :
 ac [w]ar is Cristes heriinge
 þar me shal grede & lude singe ?
 Nis noþer to lud ne to long

960 singe . . — 966 stude, u *deleted*, e *above in ? different ink.*
 — 967 þat, ? r *altered to t*; þe, þ *dotted*. — 981 þar, *no dot*.

- Hit is riht, þe bur is vre ; Fol. 236 r, col. 1
 þar louerd liggeþ and leuedy,
 960 Ich schal heom synge & sitte bi.
 Wenestu þat wise men for-lete
 Vor fule venne, þe rihte strete ?
 Ne sunne þe later schyne,
 þeyh hit beo ful in neste þine ?
 965 Scholdich for one hole brede,
 Fur-lete myne rihte stede,
 þat ich ne singe bi þe bedde,
 þar louerd haueþ his lauedi bedde ?
 Hit is my rihte, hit is my lawe,
 970 þat to þe hexste ich me drawe.
 Ac if þu yelpst of þine songe,
 þat þu kanst yolle urope & stronge,
 & seyst þu wisest monkunne,
 þat hi bi-wepen heore sunne,
 975 Solde eueruych mon wony & grede
 Riht such hi weren vn-lede ?
 Scholde hi yollen al so þu dest,
 Hi myhten a-fere heore preost.
 Mon schal beo stille & noht grede ;
 980 He mot biwepe his mysdede :
 Ac [w]ar is Cristes heriyng
 þar me grede & lude singe ?
 Nis noþe[r] to lude ne to long

at riȝte time chirche-song.

985 þu ȝolst & wones[t], & ich singe :
þi steuene is wop, & min skentinge.

Euer mote þu ȝolle & wepen

þat þu þi lif mote for-leten !

an ȝollen mote þu so heȝe,

990 þat ut berste bo þin eȝe !

Fol. 240 r, col. 2.

Weper is betere of twere twom,

þat mon bo blipe oþer grom ?

So bo hit euer in unker sipe,

þat þu bo sori & ich blipe.

995 ȝut þu aisheist wi ich ne fare
in-to oþer londe, & singe þare ?

No ! wat sholde ich among hom do,

þar neuwer blisse ne com to ?

þat lond nis god, ne hit nis este,

1000 ac wildernisse hit is & weste ;

knarres & cludes hountinge,

snou & hazel hom is genge.

þat lond is grislich & unuele,

þe men boþ wilde & unisele,

1005 hi nabbeþ noþer griþ ne sibbe :

hi ne reccheþ hu hi libbe.

Hi eteþ fihs an flehs un-sode,

suich wulues hit hadde to-brode

hi drinkeþ milc & wei þar-to,

At rihte tyme chirche-song.

985 þu yollest & wonest, & ic singe:
þi stefne is wop, & myn skentingē.

Euer mote þu yolle & wepen

þat þu þi lif mote for-leten!

& yolle mote þu so heye,

990 þat ut to-bersten bo þin eye!

Hweþer is betere of tweyre twom,

þat mon beo bliþe oþer grom? Fol. 236 r, col. 2.

So beo hit euer in vnker siþe,

þat þu beo sori & ich bliþe.

995 Yet þu ayschest hwi ic ne vare

In-to oþer londe & singe þare?

No! hwat scholdich a-mong heom do,

þar neuwer blisse ne com to?

þat lond nys god, ne hit nys este,

1000 Ac wildernesse hit is & weste;

Knarres & cludes houenetinge,

Snov & hawel hom is genge.

þat lond is grislich & vnuele,

þe men beoþ wilde & vnsele,

1005 Hi nabbeþ noþer griþ ne sibbe:

Hi ne reccheþ hw hi libbe.

Hi eteþ fys & fleys vnsode,

Suych wolues hit hadde to-broude;

Hi drinkeþ mylk & hwey þar-to,

- 1010 hi nute elles [w]at hi do ;
 hi nabbeþ noþ[er] win ne bor,
 ac libbeþ also wilde dor :
 hi goþ bi-tiȝt mid ruȝe uelle,
 riȝt suich hi comen ut of helle.
 1015 þeȝ eni god man to hom come,
 so wile dude sum from Rome,
 for hom to lere gode þewes,
 an for to leten hore un-þewes,
 he miȝte bet sitte stille,
 1020 vor al his wile he sholde spille :
 he miȝte bet teche ane bore
 to weȝe boþe sheld & spere,
 þan me þat wilde folc ibringe
 þat hi [me wolde] ihere singe. Fol. 240 v, col. 1.
 1025 Wat sol ich þar mid mine songe,
 ne sunge ich hom neuer so longe ?
 Mi song were i-spild ech del :
 for hom ne mai halter ne bridel
 bringe vrom hore wude wise,
 1030 ne mon mid stele ne mid ire.
 Ac war lon[d] is boþe este & god,
 an þar men habbeþ milde mod,
 ich noti mid hom mine þrote,
 vor ich mai do þar gode note ;
 1035 an bringe hom loue tiþinge,

1010 þat. — 1011 noþ. — 1024 me segge wolde. — 1030 stelle, *first l deleted*. — 1031 long.

- 1010 Hi nuteþ elles hwet hi do ;
 Hi nabbeþ noht wyn ne beor,
 Ac libbeþ al so wilde deor :
 Hi goþ by-tuht myd rowe felle,
 Riht suych hi come vt of helle.
 1015 þey eny god man to heom come,
 So hwile dude sum from Rome,
 For heom to lere gode þewes,
 & for to lete heore vnþewes,
 He myhte be[t] sytte stille,
 1020 Vor al his hwile he scolde spille :
 He myhte bet tēche ane beore
 To bere scheld and spere,
 þane þat wilde volk ibringe
 þat hi me wolde i-here singe.
 1025 Hwat scholdich þar mid myne song[e],
 Ne singe ic heom neuer so longe? Fol. 236 v, col. 1.
 Mi song were ispild vych del :
 For heom ne may halter ne bridel
 Bringe from here wode wyse,
 1030 Ne mon mid stele ne mid ire.
 Ac þar lond is este and god,
 & þar men habbeþ mylde mod,
 Ic notye myd heom [m]ine þrote,
 For ic may do þar gode note ;
 1035 & bringe heom leue tydinge,

vor ich of chirche-songe singe.

Hit was iseid in olde laze,

an ȝet ilast pilke soþ-saȝe,

þat man shal erien an sowe,

1040 þar he wenþ after sum god mowe :

for he is wod þat soweþ his sed

þar neuer gras ne spring ne bled.'

þe hule was wroþ, to cheste rad,

mid þisse worde hire eȝen abrad :

1045 þu seist þu witest manne bures,

þar leues boþ & faire flores,

þar two iloue in one bedde

liggeþ bi-clop & wel bi-hedde.

Enes þu sunge, ic wod wel ware,

1050 bi one bure, & woldest lere

þe lefdi to an uuel luue,

an sunge boþe loȝe & buue,

an lerdest hi to don shome

an vn-riȝt of hire licome.

1055 þe louerd þat sone under-ȝat,

liim & grinew, wel ei-wat,

sette & ledde þe [for to] lacche.

þu come sone to þan hacche,

Fol. 240 v, col. 2.

þu were [inume] in one grine,

1060 al hit aboȝte þine shine :

þu naddest non oþer dom ne laze,

1056 liim, *no dots* ; *Wr.*, *St.*, *limi*, *Str.* *liim*. — 1057 forto. —
1059 in ume.

- For ic of chirche-songe singe.
 Hit wes isayd in olde lawe,
 þat yet ilast þilke soþ-sawe,
 þat mon schal erylē & sowe,
 1040 þar he wenep̃ after god mowe :
 For he is wod þat sowep̃ his sed
 þar neuer gras ne springþ ne bled.
 þe vle wes wroþ, to cheste rad,
 Mid þisse wordē hire eyen a-braid :
 1045 ' þu seyst þu witest monne bures,
 þar leues beoþ & fayre flures,
 þar two yleoue in one bedde
 Liggeþ i-clupt & wel bi-hedde.
 Enes þu sunge, ic wot wel hware,
 1050 Bi one bure, & woldest lere
 þe leuedi to an vuel lyue,
 & [sunge] boþe lowe & buue,
 & leredest hi to don schome
 & vnriht of hire lichome.
 1055 þe louerd þat sone vnder-yat,
 Lym & grune & wel ihwat,
 Sette & leyde þe for to lacche.
 þu come sone to þan hacche,
 þu were ynume in one grune,
 1060 Al hit abouhte þine schine : Fol. 236 v, col. 2.
 þu neddest non oþer dom ne lawe,

bute mid wilde horse were to-draze.

Vonde ȝif þu miȝt eft mis-rede,

waper þu wult, wif þe maide :

1065 þi song mai bo so longe genge

þat þu shalt wippen on a sprengē.'

þe niȝtingale at þisse worde,

mid sworde an mid speres orde,

ȝif ho mon were, wolde fiȝte :

1070 ac þo ho bet do ne miȝte,

ho uaȝt mid hire wise tunge.

' Wel fiȝt þat wel specþ,' seiþ in þe songe.

Of hire tunge ho nom red :

' Wel fiȝt þat wel specþ,' seide Alured.

1075 ' Wat ! seistu þis for mine shome ?

þe louerd hadde her-of grame.

He was so gelus of his wiue,

þat he ne miȝte for his liue

iso þat man wiþ hire speke,

1080 þat his horte nolde breke.

He hire bileck in one bure,

þat hire was boþe stronge & sure :

ich hadde of hire milse an ore,

an sori was for hire sore,

1085 an skente hi mid mine songe

al þat ich miȝte raþe an longe.

Vor-þan þe kniȝt was wiþ me wroþ,

- Bute myd wilde hors [were] to-drawe.
 Vonde if þu myht eft mys-rede,
 Hweþer þu wilt, wif þe meyde :
 1065 þi song mai beo so longe genge
 þat þu schalt hwippen on a sprengē.
 þe [n]ihtegale at þisse worde,
 Mid swerde & myd speres orde,
 If heo mon were, wolde vyhte :
 1070 Ac þo heo bet do ne [m]ihte,
 Heo vauht myd hire wise tunge.
 ‘Wel viht þat wel spekþ,’ seyþ in þe songe.
 Of hire tunge heo nom red :
 ‘Wel viht þat wel spekþ,’ seyde Alured.
 1075 ‘Hwat ! seystu þis for myne schome ?
 þe louerd hadde her-of grome.
 He wes so gelus of his wyue,
 þat he ne myhte vor his lyue
 Iseo þat mon wiþ hire speke,
 1080 þat his heorte [n]olde breke.
 He hire bilek in one bure,
 þat hire was stronge & sure :
 Ic hadde of hire [m]ilce & ore,
 And sori was for hire sore,
 1085 & skente hi mid myne songe
 Al þat ic mihte raþe & longe.
 Vor-þan þe knyht wes wiþ me wroþ,

- vor riȝte niȝe ich was him loȝ :
 he dude me his oȝene shome,
 1090 ac al him turnde it to grome.
 þat under-wat þe king Henri,
 Jesus his soule do merci ! Fol. 241 r, col. 1.
 He let for-bonne þene kniȝt
 þat hadde i-don so muchel un-riȝt
 1095 ine so gode kinges londe,
 vor riȝte niȝe & for fule onde
 let þane lutle fuȝel nime
 an him for-deme lif an lime.
 Hit was wrȝ-sipe al mine kunne
 1100 for-þon þe kniȝt forles his wunne,
 an ȝaf for me an hundred punde :
 an mine briddes seten isunde,
 an hadde soȝþe blisse & hiȝte,
 an were bliȝe & wel miȝte.
 1105 Vor-þon ich was so wel a-wreke,
 euer eft ich dart þe bet speke :
 vor hit bitidde ene swo,
 ich am þe bliȝur euer mo.
 Nu ich mai singe war ich wulle,
 1110 ne dar me neuere eft mon agrulle.
 Ac þu, eremi[n]g ! þu wrecche gost !
 þu ne canst finde, ne þu nost,
 an holȝ stok þar þu þe miȝt hude,

- Vor rihte nyþe ic wes him loþ :
 He dude me his owe schome,
 1090 Ac al hit *turnde* him eft to grome.
 þat vnderyat þe kyng Henri,
Jesu his soule do mercy !
 He let for-bonne þene knyht
 þat hadde i-do svich vnriht Fol. 237 r, col. 1.
 1095 In so gode kynges londe,
 For rihte nyþe & ful onde
 Let þane lytel fowel nyme
 & him for-deme lif and lyme.
 Hit wes wrþ-sipe al myne kuzne
 1100 For-þon þe kniht fur-les his wnnē,
 & yaf for me an hundred punde :
 & myne briddes seten y-sunde,
 & hedde seþþe blisse and hihte,
 & were bliþe & wel myhte.
 1105 Vor-þan ic wes so wel awreke,
 Euer eft ich dar þe bet speke :
 For hit bi-tydde ene so,
 Ich am þe bliþure euer mo.
 Nu ic may singe hwar ic wile,
 1110 Ne dar me neuer eft mon *agrulle*.
 Ac þu, ermyng ! þu wrecche gost !
 þu ne canst fynde, ne þu nost,
 An holeh stoc hwar þu þe mist hude,

þat me ne twengeþ þine hude.

1115 Vor children, gromes, heme & hine,

hi þencheþ alle of þire pine :

ʒif hi muʒe iso þe sitte,

stones hi doþ in hore slitte,

an þe to-torued & to-heneþ,

1120 an þine fule bon to-sheneþ.

ʒif þu art i-worpe oþer i-shote,

þanne þu miȝt erest to note.

Vor me þe hoþ in one rodde,

an þu, mid þine fule codde,

1125 an mid þine ateliche spore,

bi-werest manne corn urom dore.

Nis noþer noȝt, þi lif ne þi blod :

ac þu art shueles suþe god.

þar nowe sedes boþ isowe,

1130 pinnuc, golfinc, rok, ne crowe,

ne dar þar neuwer cumen i-hende

ʒif þi buc hongep at þan ende.

þar tron shulle a-ʒere blowe,

an ʒunge sedes springe & growe,

1135 ne dar no fuzel þarto uonge

ʒif þu art þar-ouwer ihonge.

þi lif is eure luþer & qued,

þu nard noȝt bute ded.

Nu þu miȝt wite sikerliche

Fol. 241 r,
col. 2.

1130 pinnuc. golfinc. . — 1135 fuzel, *first e deleted, second e on an l.*

- þat me ne twenge þine hude.
 1115 Vor children, *gromes*, heme & hine,
 Hi þencheþ alle of þine pine :
 If hi mowe i-seo þe sitte,
 Stones hi doþ *in* heore slytte,
 & þe to-torueþ & to-heneþ,
 1120 & þine fule bon to-scheneþ.
 If þu art i-worpe oþer i-scote,
 þenne þu myht erest to note.
 Vor me þe hoþ *in* one rodde,
 & þu, myd þine fule codde,
 1125 & myd þine ateliche sweore,
 Bi-werest monne corn from deore.
 Nis nouþer nouht, þi lif ne blod :
 Ac þu art sheules swiþe god. Fol. 237 r, col. 2.
 þar newe sedes beoþ isowe,
 1130 Pynnuc, goldfynch, rok, ne crowe,
 Ne dar neuwer cumen i-hende
 If þi buk hongep at þan ende.
 þar treon schulleþ a-yer blowe,
 & yonge sedes springe & growe,
 1135 Ne dar no fuoel þar-to fonge
 If þu art þar-ouer i-honge.
 þi lif is euer luþer and qued,
 þu nart nouht bute ded.
 Nv þu myht wite sikerliche

- 1140 þat þine leches boþ grisliche
 þe wile þu art on lif-daze :
 vor wane þu hongest i-slaȝe,
 ȝut hi boþ of þe of-dradde,
 þe fuȝeles þat þe er bi-gradde.
 1145 Mid riȝte men boþ wiþ þe wroþe,
 for þu singist euer of hore loþe ;
 al þat þu singst raþe oþer late,
 hit is euer of manne un-wate :
 wane þu hauest a-niȝt igrad,
 1150 men boþ of þe wel sore of-drad.
 þu singst þar sum man shal be ded :
 euer þu bodest sumne qued.
 þu singst aȝen eiȝte lure,
 oþer of summe frondes rure ;
 1155 oþer þu bodes [t] huses brune,
 oþer ferde of manne, oþer þoues rune ;
 oþer þu bodest cualm of oreue,
 oþer þat lond-folc wurþ i-dorue,
 oþer þat wiȝ lost hire make ;
 1160 oþer þu bodest cheste an sake. Fol. 241 v, col. 1.
 Euer þu singist of manne hareme,
 [þu]rȝ þe hi boþ sori & areme :
 þu ne singst neuere one siþe,
 þat hit nis for sum un-siþe.
 1165 Her-uore hit is þat me þe shuneth,

1143 boþ, o altered from a d. — 1155 bodes. — 1162 ?merȝ
 altered to ?þurȝ.

- 1140 þat þine leches beoþ grisliche
 þe hwile þu art on lyf-daye :
 Vor hwenne þu hongest i-slawe,
 Yet hi beoþ of þe at-dradde,
 þe foweles þat þe er bigradde.
 1145 Mid rihte men beoþ wiþ þe wroþe,
 For þu singest of heore loþe ;
 Al þat þu singest raþe oþer late,
 Hit is euer of mannes vnhwate :
 Hwanne þu hauest a-nyht igrad,
 1150 Men beoþ of þe wel sore aferd.
 þu singst þar [sum man] sal beo ded :
 Euer þu bodest sumne qued.
 þu singst a-yeyn ayhte lure,
 Oþer of summe vrendes rure ;
 1155 Oþer þu bodest huses brune,
 Oþer ferde of manne, oþer þeues run[e]
 Oþer þu bodest qualm of orue,
 Oþer þat londfolc wrþ i-dorue,
 Oþer þat wif leost hire make ;
 1160 Oþer þu bodest cheste and sake.
 Euer þu singest of manne harme,
 þurh þe hi beoþ sorie & arme : Fol. 237 v, col. 1.
 þu ne singest neuer one syþe,
 þat hit nys for summe vn-syþe.
 1165 Her-vore hit is þat me þe suneþ,

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an þe to-torueþ & to-buneþ
mid staue, & stoone, & turf, & clute,
þat þu ne miȝt no-war at-rute.

[Dahet] euer suich budel in tune

1170 þat euer bodeþ un-wreste rune,
an euer bringeþ vuele tiþinge,
an þat euer spech of vuele þinge!
God Al-miȝti wrþe him wroþ,
an al þat werieþ linnene cloþ.'

1175 þe hule ne abot noȝt swiþ[e] longe,
ah ȝef ond-sware starke & stronge:
'Wat!' quaþ ho, 'hartu ihoded?
oper þu kursest al un-ihoded?
For prestes wike ich wat þu dest.

1180 Ich not ȝef þu were ȝaure prest;
ich not ȝef þu canst masse singe;
inoh þu canst of mansinge.
Ah hit is for þine alde niþe,
þat þu me akursedest oðer siðe:

1185 ah þarto is liht-lich ond-sware;
"Drah to þe!" cwaþ þe cartare.
Wi attwitestu me mine in-sihte,
an min i-wit, & mine miȝte?
For ich am witi ful i-wis,
1190 an wod al þat to kumen is :

1167 stoone, *very like* stocne. — 1169 da het. — 1175 swiþ, þ dotted. — 1183 niþe, *on erasure*. — 1184 slight erasure after þat.

- & þe to-torueþ & to-buneþ
 Mid staue, & stone, & turf, & clute,
 þat þu ne myht noware at-rute.
 Dahet euer budel in tune
 1170 þat bedeþ vnwreste rune,
 & euer bringeþ vuele tydinge,
 & þat spekeþ of vuele þinge!
 God Al-myhti wrþe him wroþ,
 & al þat wereþ lynnene cloþ.
 1175 þe vle nabod noht swiþe longe,
 Ac yef answere stark & stronge:
 ‘Hwat!’ queþ heo, ‘ertu ihoded?
 Oþer þu cursest vn-ihoded?
 For prestes wike ich wat þu dest.
 1180 Ich not if þu were preost;
 Ich not if þu canst masse singe;
 Inouh þu canst of [m]ansynge.
 Ac hit is for þine olde nyþe,
 þat þu me acursedest oþer siþe:
 1185 Ac þar-to is lihtlych answere;
 “Drah to þe!” queþ þe kartere.
 Hwi atwitestu me myne *insih*te,
 & [m]in iwit, & myne myhte?
 For ich am [witi] ful iwis,
 1190 & [w]od al þat to comen is:

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- ich wot of hunger, of her-gonge ;
 ich wot 3ef men schule libbe longe ;
 ich wat 3ef wif luste hire make ;
 ich wat [w]ar schal beo niþ & wrake ; Fol. 241 v,
 1195 ich wot hwo schal beon [an-]honge, col. 2.
 oþer elles fulne deþ a-fonge.
 3ef men habbeþ bataile inume,
 ich wat hwaþer schal beon ouer-kume ;
 ich wat 3if cwalm scal comen on orfe ;
 1200 an 3if dor schul ligge & storue ;
 ich wot 3ef treon schule blowe ;
 ich wat 3ef cornes schule growe ;
 ich wot 3ef huses schule berne ;
 ich wot 3ef men schule eorne oþer erne ;
 1205 ich wot 3ef sea schal schipes drenche ;
 ich wot 3ef snuwes schal uuele clenche.
 An 3et ich con muchel more :
 ich con inoh in bokes lore,
 an eke ich can of þe Godd-spelle
 1210 more þan ich nule þe telle :
 for ich at chirche come ilome,
 an muche leorni of wisdome ;
 ich wat al of þe tacninge,
 an of oþer feole þinge.
 1215 3ef eni mon schal rem abide,
 al ich hit wot ear hit itide.

1195 & honge. — 1202 growe, *u altered to wen.* — 1206 snuwes
 or smipes, *no dots.*

- Ich wot of hunger, of heregonge ;
 Ich wot if men sulle libbe longe ;
 Ic wot if wif lust hire make ;
 Ic wot hwar sal beo niþ & wrake ;
 1195 Ich wot hwo sal beo an-honge,
 Oþer elles fulne deþ a-vonge.
 If men habbeþ batayle i-nume,
 Ic w[o]t hwaþer sal beo ouercume ;
 Ic wot if qualm sal cumen on orve ; Fol. 237 v,
 1200 & if deor schulle ligge a-storue ; col. 2.
 Ic wot if tren schulle blowe ;
 Ic wot if corn schulle growe ;
 Ic wot if huses schulle berne ;
 Ic wot if men sulle eorne oþer erne ;
 1205 Ic wot if sea sal sch[i]pes drenche ;
 Ic wot if s[m]ithes sale vuele clenche.
 & ic con muchele more :
 Ic con ynouh in bokes lore,
 & ek ic can of þe Godspelle
 1210 More þan ic wile þe telle :
 Vor ic at chireche cume ilome,
 & muchel leorny of wisdomes ;
 Ic wot al of þe toknynges,
 & of oþer vale þinge.
 1215 If eny mon schal rem a-bide,
 Al ic hit wot ar hit i-tyde.

1198 wt. — 1205 schipes, *dot follows h, but i is omitted.* —
 1206 sMithes, *first stroke of M oblique, as if w had been begun.*

- Ofte, for mine muchele i-witte,
 wel sori-mod & w[ro]þ ich sitte :
 wan ich i-seo þat sum wrechede
 1220 is manne neh, [innoh] ich grede ;
 ich bidde þat men beon iwar[r]e,
 an habbe gode reades ȝar[r]e.
 For Alfred seide a wis word,
 euch mon hit schulde legge on hord,
 1225 “ Ȝef þu i-sihst [er] he beo i-cume,
 his str[e]ncpe is him wel neh bi-nume.”
 An grete duntres beoþ þe lasse,
 ȝef me i-keþþ mid i-warnesse, Fol. 242 r, col. 1.
 an fleo schal to-ward mis-ȝenge,
 1230 ȝef þu i-sihst hu fleo of strenge ;
 for þu miȝt blenche wel & fleo,
 ȝif þu i-sihst heo to þe teo.
 þat eni man beo falle in od-wite,
 wi schal he me his sor at-wite ?
 1235 þah ich iseo his harm bi-uore,
 ne comeþ hit noȝt of me þar-uare.
 þah þu iseo þat sum blind mon,
 þat nanne rihtne wei ne con,
 to þare dicke his dweole fulied,
 1240 an falleþ, and þar-one sulied,
 wenest þu, þah ich al iseo,

1218 worþ. — 1220 in noh. — 1221, 1222 iwarde, ȝarte. —
 1225 space between isihst and he. — 1226 strncpe. — 1227 duntres,
 very like drintes.

- Ofte, vor myne muchele witte,
 Wel sori-mod & wroþ I sytte:
 Hwanne ic i-seo þer sum wrecchede
 1220 Is cumynde neyh, i-noh ic grede;
 Ic bidde þer men beon warre,
 & habbe gode redes yare.
 Vor Alured seyde a wis word,
 Vych mon hit scholde legge on hord,
 1225 "If þu isyst her heo beo i-cume,
 His strengþe is him wel neyh binume."
 & grete dundes beoþ þe lasse,
 If me i-kepeþ myd i-warnesse,
 & fleo schal toward mis-yenge,
 1230 If þu isihst hw fleo of strengþe;
 For þu myht blenche & fleo,
 If þu isihst heo to þe teo.
 þauh [eny mon] beo falle in edwite,
 Hwi schal [he] me his sor at-wite?
 1235 þauh ic i-seo his harm bi-vore,
 Ne cumeþ hit nouht of me þar-fore. Fol. 238 r,
 þah þu iseo þat sum blynd mon, col. 1.
 þat nanne [rihtne] wey ne con,
 To þare dicke his dwele voleweþ,
 1240 & falleþ, & þar-onne sulieþ,
 Wenestu, þah ic al i-seo,

- þat hit for me þe raþere beo?
 Al swo hit fareþ bi mine witte :
 hwanne ich on mine bowe sitte,
 1245 ich wot & i-seo swiþe brihte
 an summe men kumed harm þar rihte.
 Schal he, þat þer-of no-þing not,
 hit wite me for ich hit wot?
 Schal he his mis-hap wite me,
 1250 for ich am wisure þane he?
 Hwanne ich iseo þat sum wrechede
 is manne neh, inoh ich grede,
 an bidde inoh þat hi heom schilde,
 for to-ward heom is [harm unmilde].
 1255 Ah þah ich grede lude an stille,
 al hit itid þur[h] Godes wille.
 Hwi wulleþ men of me [hi mene],
 þah ich mid soþe heo a-wene?
 þah ich hi warni al þat 3er,
 1260 nis heom þer-fore harem no þe ner :
 ah ich heom singe for ich wolde Fol. 242 r, col. 2.
 þat hi wel under-stonde schulde
 þat sum un-selþe heom is i-hende,
 hwan ich min huing to heom sende.
 1265 Naueþ no man none siker-hede

1252 neh, e on erasure. — 1254 line vacant after is. — 1256 þurþ. — 1257 himene. — 1264 huing, u obscure, o or c on u, h deleted, s above h, changes are later; Str. hoing, St. soing, Wr. song.

- þat hit for me þe raþer beo ?
 Al so hit fareþ bi [m]ine witte :
 þanne ic on myne bowe sitte,
 1245 Ic wot & i-seo swiþe brihte
 þat summe men cumeþ harm þar rihte.
 Sal he, þar he nowiht not,
 Hit wite me vor ic hit wot ?
 Sal he his myshap wyten me,
 1250 Vor ic am wisure þan he ?
 Hwanne ic i-seo þat sum wrechede
 Is manne neyh, inouh ic grede,
 & bidde inouh þat hi heom schilde,
 Vor toward heom is harm vnmylde.
 1255 Ac þah ic grede lude and stille,
 Al i-wurþ Godes wille.
 Hwi wulleþ men of me mene,
 þah ic mid soþe heo awene ?
 þah ic hi warny al þat yer,
 1260 Nis heom þar-vore [harem] þe ner :
 Ac ich singe vor ich wolde
 þer hi wel vnderstonde scholde
 þat sum vnsel heom is ihende,
 Hwen ic myn huyng to heom sende.
 1265 Naueþ mon no sikerhede

- þat he ne mai wene & a-drede
 þat sum un-hwate ne[y] him beo,
 þah he ne [conne] hit i-seo.
 For-þi seide Alfred swiþe wel,
 1270 and his worde was Godd-spel,
 þat euer-euch man, þe bet him beo,
 eauer þe bet he [hine] be-seo:
 ne truste no mon to his weole
 to swiþe, þah he habbe ueole.
 1275 Nis [nout] so hot þat hit na-coleþ,
 ne noȝt so hwit þat hit ne soleþ,
 ne noȝt so leof þat hit ne aloþeþ,
 ne noȝt so glad þat hit ne a-wroþeþ:
 ac eauere-euh þing þat eche nis,
 1280 agon schal, & al þis worldes blis.
 Nu þu miȝt wite readliche,
 þat eauere þu spekest gideliche:
 for al þat þu me seist for schame,
 euer þe seolue hit turneþ to grome.
 1285 Go so hit go, at eche fenge
 þu fallest mid þine ahene swenge;
 al þat þu seist for me to schende,
 hit is mi wurschipe at þan ende.
 Bute þu wille bet aginne,

1267 ney, y *very like* þ or wen. — 1268 con ne. — 1272 hi
 ne. — 1275 non or nou, ? *orig. t above*; Str., Wr., St. nout;
 hot. . — 1276 hwit. . — 1277 leof. . — 1278 glad. . — 1288 mi,
no dot.

- þat he ne may wene & a-drede
 þat sum vnhap neih him beo,
 þah he ne cunne hit i-seo.
 For-þi seyde Alured swiþe wel,
 1270 & his word was Godspel,
 þat euerich mon, þe bet [him] beo,
 Euer þe bet he him bi-seo :
 Ne triste no mon to his wele Fol. 238 r, col. 2.
 To swiþe, þa[h] he habbe uele.
 1275 Nis noht so hot þat hit na-coleþ,
 Ne noht so hwit þat hit [ne soleþ],
 Ne noht so leof þat hit naloþeþ,
 Ne noht so glad þat hit nawreþeþ :
 Ac euerich þing þat eche nys,
 1280 Agon schal, & al þis worldes blis.
 Nu þu miht witen redeliche,
 þat euer þu spekest gidiliche :
 For al þu me seyst vor schame,
 Euer þe [seolue] hit turneþ to grome.
 1285 Go so hit go, at eche fenge
 þu vallest myd þin owe swenge;
 Al þat þu sayst for me to schende,
 Hit is my wrþsipe at þan ende.
 Bute þu wille bet a-gynne,

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1290 ne shaltu bute schame i-winne.'

þe niȝtingale sat & sizte,
& hoh-ful was, & ful wel miȝte,
for þe hule swo ispeke hadde,
an hire speche swo iladde.

Fol. 242 v, col. 1.

1295 Heo was how-ful, & erede
hwat heo þar-after hire sede :
ah neoþeles heo hire under-stod.
'Wat!' heo seide, 'hule, artu wod ?

þu ȝeolpest of seolliche wisdomē,
1300 þu [nus] test wanene he þe come,
bute hit of wicchecrefte were.
þar-of þu, wrecche, moste þe skere
ȝif þu wult among manne b[eo]:
oþer þu most of londe fleo.

1305 For alle þeo þat [þ]er-of cuþe
heo uere i-furn of prestes muþe
amanset : swuch þu art ȝette,
þu wicche-crafte neauer ne lete.
Ich þe seide nu lutel ere,

1310 an þu askedest ȝef ich were
abisemere to preost ihoded.
Ah þe mansing is so ibroded,
þah no preost a londe nere,
a wrecche neoþeles þu were :

1300 miȝtest, *no dot*, ȝ altered to s. — 1303 boe. — 1305 þer, þ dotted. — 1306 uere or nere, u deleted, marg. w in different ink.

1290 Ne schaltu bute schame i-wynne.'

þe nyhtegale sat and syhte,
& hauhful was, & wel myhte,
For þe vle so i-speke hadde,
And hire speche so i-ladde.

1295 Heo wes houhful, and erede
Hwat heo þar-after hire seyde :
Ac noþeles heo hire vnderstod.
'Hwat!' heo seyde, 'vle, [artu] wod ?

þu yelpest of selliche wisdomē,
1300 þu nustest hwenne hit þe come,
Bute hit of wicchecraftē were.
þar-of þu, wrecche, most þe skere
If þu wilt a-mong manne beo :
Oþer þu most of londe fleo.

1305 Vor alle þeo þat þer-of cuþe
Heo weren ifurn of prestes muþe
Amansed : such [þu] art yette.

* * * * *

Ic þe seyde nv lutel ere,
1310 & þu askedest if ich were
A bysemare to preoste i-hoded. Fol. 238 v, col. 1.
Ac þe mansyng is so i-broded,
þauh no preost a londe nere,
A wrecche naþeles þu were:

1298 ar tu. — 1300 nustest *very like* mistest, *no dot, third stroke has up tick*. — 1307 such art. — 1308 line omitted.

1315 for eauer-euch chil[d] þe cleopeþ fule,
an euer-euch man a wrecche hule.

Ich habbe iherd, & soþ hit is,
þe mon mot beo wel storre-wis
an wite innop of wucche þinge kume

1320 so þu seist þat is i-wune.

Hwat canstu, wrecche þing, of storre,
bute þat þu bi-haitest hi feorre?

Alswo deþ mani dor & man,
þeo of [swucche] na-wiht ne con.

1325 On ape mai a bo[c] bi-halde,
an leues wenden, & eft fólde:
ac he ne con þe bet þar-uore
of clerkes lore top ne more.

Fol. 242 v, col. 2.

þah þu i-seo þe steorre alswa,
1330 nartu þe wisure neauer þe mo.

Ah 3et þu, fule þing, me chist,
an wel grimliche me at-wist
þat ich singe bi manne huse,
an teache wif breke spuse.

1335 þu liest i-wis, þu fule þing!
þ[urh] me nas neauer i-schend spusing.
Ah soþ hit is ich singe & grede

1315 chil, later d above; fule, f on erasure. — 1319 kume deleted, marg. kume in different ink. — 1320 i wune, no dots. — 1321 hwat, wen on erasure. — 1324 hswucche. — 1325 boe, e deleted, c above in 2 different ink. — 1334 wift, t deleted; Str. wife. — 1336 þ me, cross line of abbreviation omitted.

- 1315 For euerich chi[l]d þe clepede fule,
 & euerich man a wrecche vle.
 Ich habbe i-herd, & soþ hit is,
 þe mon mot beo wel sturre-wis
 & wite i-noh of hwiche þinge cume
- 1320 So þu seyst þat is iwune.
 Hwat constu, wr[e]cche þing, of stor[r]e,
 Bute þat þu bihaitest hi ferre?
 Al so doþ mony deor and man,
 þeo of suyche no wiht ne can.
- 1325 On ape may on bok biholde,
 & leues wende, and eft folde:
 Ac he ne con þe bet þar-vore
 Of clerkes lore top ne more.
 þey þu i-seo þe steorre al so,
- 1330 Nertu þ[e] wisere neuer þe mo.
 Ac yet þu, fule þing, me chist,
 & wel grimlyche me at-wist
 þat ic singe bi manne huse,
 & theche wyue breke spuse.
- 1335 þu lyeest i-wis, þu fule þing!
 þurh me nes neuer isend spusing.
 Ac soþ hit is ich singe & grede

1315 chid. — 1321 wrecche; storie, later r above i. — 1322 bihaitest, -it- later obscurely corrected. — 1330 þu.

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þar lauedies beoþ & faire maide;
 & soþ hit is of luue ich singe:
 1340 for god wif mai i spusing
 bet luuien hi[r]e oʒene were,
 þane awe[r] hire copenere;
 an maide mai luue cheose
 þat hire wurþ-schipe ne for-leose,
 1345 an luuie mid rihte luue
 þane þe schal beon hire buue.
 Swiche luue ich itache & lere,
 þer-of beoþ al mine i-bere.
 Þah sum wif beo of nesche mode,
 1350 for wummon beoþ of softe blode,
 þat heo, þurh sume sottes lore
 þe ʒeorne bit & sikeþ sore,
 mis-[r]empe & mis-do sumne stunde,
 schal ich þar-uore beon ibunde?
 1355 ʒif wimmen luuieth un-rede,
 hwitestu me hore mis-dede?
 ʒef wimmon þenceth luuie derne,
 [ne mai] ich mine songes werne.

1341 hite, t deleted, r inserted above. — 1342 awet. — 1347
 swiche, c very like t. — 1351 after heo crossed þ (burh) deleted,
 marg. for in later hand; sottes, -s on erasure. — 1353 rempe or
 tempe deleted, p like þ, marg. steppe. — 1357 wimmon, on or en
 on erasure. — 1358 ne ne mai.

- þar leuedis beoþ & feyre meide;
 & soþ hit is of luue ich singe:
 1340 For god wif may in spusinge
 Bet luuyen hire owe were,
 þan on oþer, hire copinere;
 & mayde may luue cheose
 þat hire trev-schipe ne for-leose,
 1345 & luuye mid rihte luue
 þane þat schal hire beo boue.
 Suyche luue ic theche & lere,
 þer-of beoþ al myne i-ler. Fol. 238 v, col. 2.
 þauh sum wif beo of neysse mode,
 1350 Vor wymmen beoþ of softe blode,
 þat heo, vor summe sottes lore
 þe yorne bit and sykeþ sore,
 Mis-nyme & mis-do sume stunde,
 Schal ic þar-vore beo ibunde?
 1355 Yef wymmen luuyep for vnrede,
 Witestu me heore mysdede?
 If wymmøn þencheþ luuye derne,
 [Ne may] ic myne songes werne.

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Wummon mai pleie under clope,
 1360 weþe[r] heo wile wel þe wroþe :
 & heo mai do bi mine songe,
 hwaþer heo wule wel þe wronge. Fol. 243 r, col. 1.
 For nis a worlde þing so god,
 þat ne mai do sum un-god
 1365 ȝif me hit wule turne amis.
 [Euere] gold & seoluer, god hit is :
 an noþeles þar-mid þu miȝt
 spus-bruche buggen, & unriȝt.
 Wepne beoþ gode griþ to halde :
 1370 ah neoþeles þar-mide beoþ men a-cwalde
 a-ȝeines riht [an] fale londe,
 þar þeoues hi bereð an honde.
 Alswa hit is bi mine songe,
 þah heo beo god, me [hine] mai mis-fonge,
 1375 an drahe hine to sothede,
 an to oþre uuele dede.
 Ah [schaltu], wrecch, luue tele ?
 Bo wuch [ho bo], vich luue is fele
 bitweone wepmon & wimmane :
 1380 ah ȝef heo is at-broide, þenne
 he is un-fele & for-brode.
 Wroþ wurþe heom þe holi rode
 þe rihte ikunde swo for-breideþ !

1360 weþet, *t* deleted, *r* above. — 1366 eor deleted, *marg.*
euere. — 1371 & for ? an, *cp. 1195*. — 1372 bereð, *h* altered to
b. — 1374 hi ne. — 1377 sch altu. — 1378 hobo. — 1381
 broide, *no dot, the i* deleted.

- Wymmon may pleye vnder cloþe,
 1360 Hweþer heo wile wel þe wroþe :
 & heo may do bi [m]yne songe,
 Hweþer heo wile wel þe wronge.
 Vor nys aworlde þing so god,
 þat ne may do sum vngod
 1365 If me hit wile turne a-mys.
 Vor gold & seoluer, god hit is :
 & napeles þar-myd þu myht
 Spus-bruche bugge, & vnryht.
 Wepne beoþ gode griþ to holde :
 1370 & napeles þar-myd beoþ men aqold
 Ayeynes riht of alle londe,
 þar þeoues hi bereþ an honde.
 Al so hit is bi myne songe,
 þah heo beo god, me hine may mys-fonge,
 1375 & drawe hine to sothede,
 & to oþre vuele dede.
 Ah schaltu, wrecche, luue tele?
 Beo hwich heo beo, vich luue is fele
 Bi-twene þe mon & wymmone :
 1380 Ah if heo is at-broyde, þeonne
 He is vn-vele and for-broyde.
 Wroþ wurþe him þe holy rode
 þe rihte i-cundz so for-breydeþ!

1361 Myne. — 1370 aq^old'. — 1374 fonge *above line for space.*

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W[u]nder hit is þat heo na-wedeþ.

1385 An swo heo doþ, for heo beoþ wode
þe bute nest goþ to brode.

Wummon is of nesche flesche,
an flesches lustes is strong to cwesse :
nis wunder nan þah he abide.

1390 For flesches lustes hi makeþ slide,
ne beoþ heo nowt alle for-lore
þat stumpeþ at þe flesches more:
for moni wummon haueþ mis-do
þat aris[t] op of þe slo.

1395 Ne beoþ nowt ones alle sunne,
for-þan hi beoþ tweire kunne: Fol. 243 r, col. 2.
su[m] arist of þe flesches luste,
an sum of þe gostes custe.

þar flesh draheþ men to drunnesse,
1400 an to wronc-hede, & to gol-nesse,
þe gost mis-deþ þurch niþe an onde,
& seopþe mid murhþe of monnes honde,
an ȝeo[r]neþ after more & more,
an lutel rehþ of milce & ore;

1405 an stiþþ on hey þur[h] modinesse,
an ouer-hoheð þanne lasse.

Sei [me soþ], ȝef þu hit wost,

1384 winder. — 1394 aris. — 1397 sun. — 1398 erasure before
custe. — 1400 wronc, *very like* wrone. — 1403 ȝeoneþ. — 1405 y
like þ; þurþ. — 1407 me s soþ, *letter before o is s or o ? on another*
letter.

- Wunder [hit is] þat heo ne awedep.
 1385 & so heo doþ, vor heo beoþ wode Fol. 239 r, col. 1.
 þat bute neste goþ to brode.
 Wymmon is of neysse fleysses,
 & fleysses lustes is strong to queysse:
 Nis wunder non þah he abide.
 1390 Vor fleysses lustes hi makeþ slide,
 Ne beoþ heo nouht alle for-lore
 þat stumpeþ at þe fleysses more:
 Vor mony wymmon haueþ mys-do
 þat aryst vp of þe slo.
 1395 Ne beoþ noht ones alle sunne,
 Vor-þan hi beoþ tweire i-kunne:
 Sum arist of fleysses luste,
 & sum of þe gostes custe.
 þar fleys drahp nv men to drunkenesse,
 1400 & to wlonk-hede, & to golnesse,
 þe gost mys-doþ þurh nyþ and onde,
 & seþþe myd [m]urehþe of monnes honde,
 & wunneþ after more and more,
 & lutel rekþ of [m]ilce and ore;
 1405 & styhþ on heyh þur modynesse,
 & ouer-howeþ þane lasse.
 Sey me soþ, if þu hit wost,

1384 Wunder his þat. — 1402 Murehþe. — 1404 Milce. —
 1406 howeþ added later in ? orig. hand.

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hweper deþ wurse, flesch þe gost?
 þu miȝt segge, ȝef þu wult,
 1410 þat lasse is þe flesches gult:
 moni man is of his flesche clene,
 þat is mid mode deouel imene.
 Ne schal non mon wumman bi-grede,
 an flesches lustes hire up-breide:
 1415 swuch he may tellen of gol-nesse,
 þat sunegeþ wurse imodi-nesse.
 Bet ȝif ich schulde aluue bringe
 wif oþer maide, hwanne ich singe.
 Ich wolde wiþ þe maide holde,
 1420 ȝif þu hit const ariht at-holde:
 lust nu, ich segge þe hwar-uore,
 vp to þe toppe from þe more.
 Ȝef maide luueþ dernliche
 heo stumpeþ & falþ i-cundeliche:
 1425 for þah heo sum hwile pleie,
 heo nis nout feor ut of þe weie;
 heo mai hire guld at-wende
 arihte weie þur[h] chirche-bende,
 an mai eft habbe to make
 1430 hire leof-mon wiþ-ute sake,
 an go to him bi daies lihte,
 þat er stal to bi þeostre nihte.
 An ȝunling not hwat swuch þing is:

Fol. 243 v, col. 1.

1408 wurse. . — 1415 may, y and first l in tellen on erasures. —
 1420 hloide, first l deleted. — 1428 þurþ.

- Hweþer doþ wurse, fleys þe gost ?
 þu myht segge, if þu wult,
 1410 þat lasse is þes fleys [s] es gult :
 [Mony mon] is of his fleysse clene,
 þat is myd mode deouel imene.
 Ne schal no mon wymman bi-grede,
 & fleysse lustes hire vp-breyde :
 1415 Such heo mahte beo of golnesse,
 þat sunegeþ wurse in modinesse.
 Hwet if ic schulde a luue bringe
 Wif oþer mayde, hwanne ic singe ?
 Ic wolde wiþ þe mayde holde,
 1420 If þu const aryht at-holde :
 Lust nu, ic segge þe hwar-vore,
 Vp to þe toppe from þe more. Fol. 239 r, col. 2.
 If mayde luueþ derneliche
 Heo stumpeþ & falþ icundeliche :
 1425 Vor þaih heo sum hwile pleye,
 Heo nys noht feor vt of þe weye ;
 Heo may hire guld at-wende
 A rihte weye þurh chirche-bende,
 & may eft habbe to make
 1430 Hire leof-mon wiþ-vte sake,
 & gon to him bi dayes lyhte,
 þat er bi-stal on þeoster nyhte.
 þat yongling not hwat such þing is :

- his ȝunge blod hit draȝeþ amis,
 1435 an sum sot mon hit tiþ þar-to
 mid alle þan þat he mai do.
 He comeþ & fareþ & beod & bid,
 an heo bi-stant & ouer-sid,
 an bi-sehþ ilome & longe.
 1440 Hwat mai þat chil[d] þah hit mis-fonge?
 Hit nuste neauer hwat hit was,
 for-þi hit þohte fondi [þ]as,
 an wite iwis hwuch beo þe gorne
 þat of so wilde makeþ [tome].
 1445 Ne mai ich for reo[w]e lete,
 wanne ich iseo þe tohte ilete
 þe luue bring on þe ȝunglinge,
 þat ich of murþe him ne singe.
 Ich reache heom bi mine songe
 1450 þat swucch luue ne lest noȝt longe:
 for mi song lute hwile ilest,
 an luue ne deþ noȝt bute rest
 on swuch childre, & sone a-geþ,
 an falþ a-dun þe hote breþ.
 1455 Ich singe mid heom one þroȝe,
 beginne on heh, & endi laȝe,
 an lete [mine] songes falle
 an lute wile a-dun mid alle.

1440 chil. — 1442 þas, þ dotted. — 1443 hwuch, wen orig.
 u. — 1444 to me. — 1445 reoþe, no dot. — 1449 reache, before
 r a t altered to d or ð. — 1450 swucch, first c altered from long s
 or ?l. — 1457 mines.

- His yonge blod hit drahp amys,
 1435 & sum sot man hit tyhp þar-to
 Mid alle þan þat he may do.
 He cumeþ & fareþ and beod abid,
 & he bistarte an oþer sid,
 & bi-sekþ i-lome and longe.
 1440 Hwat may þat child þah hit mis-fonge?
 Hit nuste neuer hwat hi[t] was,
 Vor-þi hit þouhte fondi þas,
 & wyte iwis hwich beo þe gome
 þat of þe wilde makeþ tome.
 1445 Ne may ic vor reuþe lete,
 Hwanne ic iseo þe tohte ilete
 þe luue bring on [þ]e [y]unglinge,
 þat ic of murehþe him ne singe.
 Ic theche heom bi myne songe
 1450 þat suyche luue ne last noht longe:
 For my song lu[tl]e wile ileste,
 & luue ne doþ noht bute reste
 On such childre, & sone a-geþ,
 & falþ a-dun þe [hote breþ].
 1455 I singe myd heom one þrowe,
 Bi-ginne an heyh, & endi lowe,
 & lete mine songes falle
 A lu[tl]e wi[l]e a-dun myd alle.

1440 fonge, ge *cut off*. — 1441 his was. — 1447 me wung-
 linge, m *deleted*. — 1451 lude. — 1453 heorte bred, *marg.* þ. —
 1458 A lude wise.

- þat maide wot, hwanne ich swike,
 1460 þat luue is mine songes iliche,
 for hit nis bute a lutel breþ,
 þat sone kumeþ, & sone geþ.
 þat child bi me hit under-stond,
 an his un-red to red wend Fol. 243 v, col. 2.
 1465 an i-seþ wel, bi mine songe,
 þat dusi luue ne last noȝt longe.
 Ah wel ich wule þat þu hit wite,
 loþ me beoþ wiues ut-schute :
 ah [w]if mai [of me] nime ȝeme,
 1470 ich ne singe nawt hwan ich teme.
 An wif ah lete so [t]tes lore,
 þah spusing-bendes þuncheþ sore.
 Wundere me þungþ wel starc & stor,
 hu eni mon so eauar for,
 1475 þat e his heorte miȝte driue
 [to] do hit to oþers mannes wiue :
 for oþer hit is of twam þinge,
 ne mai þat þridde no man bringe ;
 o[þ]ar þe lauerd is wel aht,
 1480 oþer aswunde & nis naht.
 ȝef he is wurþful & aht man,
 nele no man þat wisdo[m] can,
 hure of is wiue do him schame :
 for he mai him a-drede grame,

1459 wot. — 1469 ȝif; of of me. — 1471 sortes. — 1476 an
 o do. — 1479 oþar, þ dotted. — 1482 wisdom.

- þat mayde wot, hwenne I s[w]ike, Fol. 239 v, col. 1.
 1460 [þat] luue is myne songes i-liche,
 Vor hit nys bute [a lutel] breþ,
 þat sone cumeþ, and sone geþ.
 þat child bi me hit vnder-stond,
 & his vnred to rede iwen[d]
 1465 & syhþ wel, bi myne songe,
 þat dusy luue ne last noht longe.
 Ac wel ic wile þat þu hit wite,
 Loþ me beoþ wifes vt-schute :
 Ac wif may of me nyme yeme,
 1470 Ic ne singe noht hwen ic teme.
 & wif auh lete sottes lore,
 þauh spusyng-bendes byndeþ sore.
 Wunder me þinkþ stark & sor,
 Hw enymon so haueþ for
 1475 þat his heorte myhte dryue
 To do hit to oþres mannes wyue :
 Vor oþer hit is of twam þinge,
 Ne may þe þridde no mon bringe ;
 Oþer þe louerd is wel auht,
 1480 Oþer a-swunde & nys nouht.
 If he is wrþful & auht mon,
 Nele no mon þat wisdom can,
 Hure of his wive do him schome :
 Vor he may him a-drede grame,

- 85 an þat he for-leose þat þer hongeþ,
 1 þat him eft þar-to noȝt ne longeþ.
 An þah he þat noȝt ne a-drede,
 hit is un-riȝt & gret sot-hede
 [to] mis-don one gode manne,
 1490 an his ibedde from him spanne.
 Ȝef hire lauerd is for-wurde
 an un-orne at bedde & at borde,
 hu miȝte þar beo eni luue
 wanne [a swuch] cheorles buc hire leþ buue?
 1495 Hu mai þar eni luue beo,
 war swuch man gropeþ hire þeo?
 Her-bi þu miȝt wel under-stonde
 þat on [is] areu, þat oþer schonde, Fol. 244 r, col. 1.
 to stele to oþres mannes bedde.
 1500 For ȝif aht man is hire bedde,
 þu miȝt wene þat þe mistide,
 wanne þu list bi hire side.
 An ȝef þe lauerd is a w[re]cche,
 hwuch este miȝtistu þar uecche?
 1505 Ȝif þu bi-þenchest hwo hire ofligge,
 þu miȝt mid wlate þe este bugge.
 Ich not hu mai eni freo-man
 for hire sechen after þan.
 Ȝef he bi-þençþ bi hwan he lai,

1487 adrede, *first d altered to a or a to d*. — 1489 an o mis. —
 1494 aswuch. — 1498 his. — 1503 werche. — 1509 þençþ or
 ? þenep.

- 1485 & þat he forleose þat þer hongef,
 þat him eft þar-to noht ne longeþ.
 & þah he þat nouht ne adredeþ,
 Hit is vnriht & gret sothede
 To mys-do one gode manne,
 1490 & his ibedde from him spanne.
 If hire louerd is for-wurþe
 & vnorne at bedde & at borde,
 Hw myhte þar beo eny luue
 Hwenne a cherles buk hire lay buue?
 1495 Hw may þer eny luue beo,
 Hwar such mon gropeþ hire þeo? Fol. 239 v, col. 2.
 Her-bi þu miht wel vnderstonde
 þat on is at þen oþres schonde
 To stele to oþres mannes bedde,
 1500 Vor if auht man is hire i-bedde,
 þu myht wene þat þe mys-tide,
 Hwanne þu lyst bi hire side.
 & if þe louerd is a wrecche,
 Hwych este myhtestu þar vecche?
 1505 If þu bi-þenchest hwo hire of-ligge,
 þu myht myd wlate þe este bugge.
 Ich not hw may eny freomon
 Vor hire sechen after þan.
 If he bi-þenkþ bi hwam he lay,

1510 al mai þe luue gan a-wai.ʹ

þe hule was glad of swuche tale :

heo þoʒte þat te nihtegale,

þah heo wel speke atte frume,

hadde at þen ende mis-nume;

1515 an seide, ‘Nu ich habbe ifunde

þat maidenen beoþ of þine imunde;

mid heom þu holdest, & heom bi-werest,

an ouer-swiþe þu hi herest.

þe lauedies beoþ to me i-wend,

1520 to me heo hire mode send.

For hit itit ofte & ilome,

þat wif & were beoþ uni-some:

& þer-fore þe were gulte,

þat leof is over wummon to pulte,

1525 an speneþ on þare al þat he haueþ,

an siueþ þare þat no riht naueþ,

an haueþ at-tom his rihte spuse,

wowes weste, & lere huse,

wel þunne i-schud, & iued wroþe,

1530 an let heo bute mete & cloþe.

Wan he comeþ ham eft to his wiue,

ne dar heo noʒt a word i-schire: Fol. 244 r, col. 2.

he chid & gred swuch he beo wod,

an ne bringþ [hom] non oþer god.

1535 Al þat heo deþ him is un-wille,

1510 Al may þe luue gon a-way.'

þe vle wes glad of suche tale :

Heo þouhte þat þe nyhtegale,

þah heo wel speke at þe frume,

Hadde at þan ende mys-nume ;

1515 & seyde, 'Nv ich habbe i-funde

þat maydenes beoþ of þine i-munde ;

Mid heom þu holdest, & heom bi-werest,

& ouer-swipe þu hi herest.

þe lauedies beoþ to me i-wend,

1520 To me hire mone heo send.

For hit i-tyd ofte and i-lome,

þat wif & were beoþ vnisome :

& þer-fore þat were gulte,

þat leof is oþer wymmon to pulte,

1525 & speneþ on þare al þat he haueþ,

& syweþ þare þat noht naueþ,

& haueþ atom his riche spuse,

Wowes west, and lere huse,

Wel þunne i-srud, & i-ved wroþe,

1530 & let heo bute mete & cloþe.

Hwenne he cumeþ hom eft to his wyue,

Ne dar he noht a word i-schire :

He chid & gred such he beo wod, Fol. 240 r, col. 1.

& ne bringþ hom non oþer god.

1535 Al þat heo doþ him is vnwille,

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al þat heo spekeþ hit is him ille:
an oft hwan heo noȝt ne mis-deþ,
heo haueþ þe fust in hire teþ.

þ[er] is nan mon þat ne mai ibringe
1540 his wif amis mid swucche þinge;
me hire mai so ofte mis-beode,
þat heo do wule hire ahene neode.
La, Godd hit wot! heo nah i-weld,
þa[h] heo hine makie kuke-weld.

1545 For hit itit lome & ofte,
þat his wif is wel nesche & softe,
of faire bleo & wel i-diht:
þi hit is þe more unriht
þat he his luue spene on þare

1550 þat nis wurþ one of hire heare.
An swucche men beoþ wel mani-folde,
þat wif ne kunne noȝt ariȝt holde.
Ne mot non mon wiþ hire speke;
he ueneð heo wule anon to-breke

1555 hire spusing, ȝef heo lokeþ
oþer wiþ manne faire spekeþ.
He hire bi-luþ mid keie & loke:
þar-þurh is spusing ofte to-broke.
For ȝef heo is þar-to ibroht,

1560 he deþ þat heo nadde ear i-þoht.
[Dahet] þat to swuþe hit bi-speke,

- Al þat heo spekeþ hit is him ille:
& ofte hwenne heo noht ne mys-deþ,
Heo haueþ þe fust in þe theþ.
Nis nomon þat ne may i-brynge
1540 His wif amys myd suche þinge;
Me hire may so ofte mys-beode,
þat heo do wile hire owe neode.
La, God hit wot! heo nah i-welde,
þah heo hine make cukeweld.
1545 For hit i-tyt ilome and ofte,
þat his wif is neysse & softe,
Of fayre bleo & wel i-diht:
þi hit is þe more vnryht
þat he his [luue] spene on þare
1550 þat nis wurþ on of hire heare.
& suche men beoþ wel manyfolde,
þat wif ne cunne ariht holde.
Ne mot no mon wiþ hire speke;
He weneþ heo wile [anon] to-breke
1555 Hire spusyng, if heo lokeþ
Oþer wiþ manne veyre spekeþ.
He hire bilukþ myd keye & loke:
þar-þurh is spusing ofte i-broke.
Vor if heo is þar-to i-brouht,
1560 He deþ þat heo nedde ear iþouht.
Dehaet þat to swiþe hit bi-speke,

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þah swucche wiues [heom] a-wreke!

Her-of þe lauedies to me menep,

an wel sore me [ahwenep]:

1565 wel neh min heorte wule to-chine,

hwon ich bi-holde hire pine. Fol. 244 v, col. 1.

Mid heom ich wepe swi[þ]e sore,

an for heom bidde Cristis ore,

þat þe lauedi sone a-redde

1570 an hire sende betere ibedde.

An oþer þing ich mai þe telle,

þat þu ne schald, for þine felle,

ondswere none þarto finde;

al þi sputing schal aswinde.

1575 Moni chapmon & moni cniht

luueþ & [hald] his wif ariht,

an swa deþ moni bonde-man:

þat gode wif deþ after þan,

an serueþ him to bedde & to borde

1580 mid faire dede & faire worde,

an ȝeorne fondeþ hu heo muhe

do þing þat him beo i-duȝe.

þe lauerd in-to þare [þ]eode

fareþ ut on þare beire nede,

1585 an is þat gode wif unbliþe

for hire lauerdes houd-siþe,

an sit & sihð wel sore of-longed,

1562 hire. — f564 ah wenep. — 1567 swise. — 1569 þat lea
þe, lea *deleted*. — 1576 hlād. — 1583 þeode, þ *dotted*.

- þah suche wiues heom a-wreke!
 Her-of to me þe leuedies heom menep,
 And wel sore me a-hwenep:
 1565 Wel neyh myn heorte wile to-chine,
 Hwenne ic bi-holde heore [pine].
 Mid heom ic wepe swiþe sore,
 & for heom bidde Cristes ore,
 þat þe leuedi sone a-redde
 1570 & hire sende betere i-bedde. Fol. 240 r, col. 2.
 An oþer þing ic may þe telle,
 & þu ne schalt, for þine felle,
 Onswere non þar-to fynde;
 Al þis sputing schal aswinde.
 1575 Mony chapmon & mony knyht
 Luueþ & halt his wif ariht,
 & so doþ mony bonde-man:
 þat gode wif doþ after þan,
 & sarueþ him to bedde & to borde
 1580 Mid fayre dede & fayre worde,
 & yorne vondeþ hw heo mowe
 Do þing þat him beo i-duwe.
 þe louerd in-to þare þeode
 Vareþ vt on þare beyre neode,
 1585 & is þat gode wif vnbliþe
 Vor hire louerd's houþ-syþe,
 & sit & sykþ wel sore of-longed,

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an hire sore an horte onged;
al for hire louerdess sake

1590 haueþ daies kare & niztes wake :

an swuþe longe hire is þe hwile,
an ek steape hire þunþ a mile.

Hwanne oþre slepeþ hire abute,
ich one lust þar wið-þute,

1595 an wot of hire sore mode,

an singe a-nizt for hire gode :

an mine gode song, for hire þinge,
ich turne su [m]-del to murni [n] ge.

Of hure seorhe ich bere sume,

1600 for-þan ich am hire wel welcume: Fol. 244 v, col. 2.

ich hire helpe hwat [I mai],

for [ho 3eþ] þane rehte wai.

Ah þu me hauest sore i-gramed,

þat min heorte is wel neh alamed,

1605 þat ich mai un-neape speke:

ah 3et ich wule forþure reke.

þu seist þat ich am manne ylað,

an euer-euch man is wið me wroð,

an me mid stone & lugge þreteþ,

1610 an me to-busteþ & to-beteþ,

an hwanne heo habeþ me of-slahe,

1598 sun del ; murnige. — 1601 imai. — 1602 ho3eþ. — 1607
ylað, y like wen, r on l or l on r, pencil cross at end, dot of first let-
ter pencilled out.

- & hire sore an heorte ongreþ;
 Al vor hire louerd̃es sake
 1590 Hauēþ dayes kare & nihtes wake :
 & swiþe longe hire is þe hwile,
 & vych stape hire þinkþ a [m]ile.
 Hwenne oþre slepeþ hire a-bute,
 Ich one lust þar wyþ-þute,
 1595 & wot of hire sore mode,
 & singe a-nyht for hire gode :
 & myn gode song, for hire þinge,
 Ic turne sum-del to [m]urnynge.
 Of hure seorwe ic bere sume,
 1600 Vor-þan ic am hire wel welcum̃ :
 Ic hire helpe hwat ich may,
 For [ho geþ] þane rihte way.
 & þu me hauest sore i-gremed,
 þat myn heorte is neyh a-lem̃ed,
 1605 þat ic may vnneþe speke :
 Ac yet ic wile [forþurre] reke.
 þu seyst þat ic am monne loþ, Fol. 240 v, col. 1.
 & vich mon is wiþ me wroþ,
 & me myd stone & lugge þreteþ,
 1610 & me to-burste[þ] & to-bete[þ],
 & hwanne hi habbeþ me ofslawe,

1592 Mile. — 1598 Murnynge. — 1602 howeþ. — 1606 for þurre. — 1607 ic *above line*. — 1610 to burst; to bete.

heo hongeþ me on heore hahe,
 þar ich a-scheweþe pie an crowe
 fro[m] þan þe þar is isowe.

1615 þah hit beo soþ, ich do heom god,
 an for heom ich [s]chadde mi blod:
 ich do heom god mid mine deaþe,
 war-uore þe is wel inmeaþe.

For þah þu ligge dead & clinge,
 1620 þi deþ nis nawt to none þinge:
 ich not neauer to hwan þu miȝt,
 for þu nart bute a wrecche wiȝt.
 Ah þah mi lif me beo at-schote,
 þe ȝet ich mai do gode note:

1625 me mai [up one] smale sticke
 me sette a wude ine þe þicke,
 an swa mai mon tolli him to
 lutle briddes & iuo,
 an swa me mai mid me bi-ȝete

1630 wel gode brede to his mete.

Ah þu neure mon to gode
 liues ne deaþes stal ne stode:
 ich not to hwan þu breist þi brod,
 liues ne deaþes ne deþ hit god.’

Fol. 245 r, col. 1.

1635 þe nihtegale i-h[e]rde þis,
 an hupte uppon on blowe ris,
 an herre sat þan heo dude ear:

- Heo anhoþ me in heore hawe,
 þar ich aschevle pie & crowe
 From þan þat þer is isowe.
- 1615 þah hit beo soþ, ic do heom god,
 & for heom ic schedde my blod :
 Ic do heom god myd myne deþe,
 þar-fore þe is wel unmeþe.
 For [þah] þu ligge ded & clinge,
- 1620 þi deþ nys nouht to none þinge :
 Ic not neuær to hwan þu myht,
 For þu nart bute a wreche wiht.
 Ah þah my lif me beo atschote,
 þe yet ic may do gode note :
- 1625 Me may vppe smale sticke
 Me sette a wude ine þe þikke,
 & so may mon tolli him to
 Lutle briddes and i-vo,
 & so me may myd me byete
- 1630 Wel gode brede to his mete.
 Ah þu neuær mon to gode
 Lyues ne deþes stal ne stode :
 Ic not to hwan þu breist þi word,
 Lyues ne deþes ne doþ hit god.'
- 1635 þe [n]ihtegale iherde þis,
 & hupte vppe on blowe ris,
 & herre sat þane heo dude er :

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'Hule,' he seide, ' beo nu wear,
 nulle ich wiþ þe plaidi namore,
 1640 for her þe mist þi rihte lore:
 þu zeilpest þat þu art manne loþ,
 an euer-euch wiht is wið þe w[ro]þ;
 an mid 3ulinge & mid i-grede
 þu wanst wel þat þu art unlede.
 1645 þu seist þat gromes þe i-foð,
 an heie on rodde þe an-hoð,
 an þe to-twichet & to-schakeð,
 an summe of þe schawles makeð.
 Me þunch þat þu for-leost þat game,
 1650 þu 3ulpest of þire o3e schame:
 me þunch þat þu me gest an honde,
 þu 3ulpest of þire o3ene schomme.'
 Þo heo hadde þeos word i-cwede,
 heo sat in one faire stude,
 1655 an þar-after hire steuene dihte,
 an song so schille & so brihte,
 þat feor & ner me hit i-herde.
 Þar-uore an-an to hire cherde
 þrusche, & þrostle, & wude-wale,
 1660 an fuheles boþe grete & smale:
 for-þan heom þuhte þat heo hadde
 þe houle ouer-come, uor-þan heo gradde

1642 worþ. — 1646 an þe heie, þe *deleted*. — 1649 þu *much*
like þir, no dot. — 1656 cchile, s *on first c.* — 1659 þrusche..

- 'Vle,' he seyde, 'beo nu [w]er,
 Nule ic wiþ þe playdi namore, Fol. 240 v, col. 2.
 1640 Vor her þu myst þi ryhte lore:
 þ[u] yelpest þat þu art mozne loþ,
 & euervich wiht is wiþ þe wroþ;
 & myd yollinge & myd i-grede
 þu þinchst wel þat þu art vnlede.
 1645 þu seyst þat gromes þe i-vop,
 & heye on rode þe an-hoþ,
 & þe to-twiccheþ & to-schakeþ,
 & summe of þe scheules makeþ.
 Me þinkþ þat þu for-lest þat game,
 1650 þu yelpest of þire owe schome:
 Me þinkþ þat þu me gest an honde,
 þu yelpest of þine owe schonde.'
 þo heo hadde þeos word [icwede],
 Heo sat in one fayre stude,
 1655 & þar-after hire stefne dihte,
 & song so schille & so brihte,
 þat fur & neor me hit i-herde.
 þar-vore [anon] to hire cherde
 þruysse, & þrostle, & wodewale,
 1660 & foweles boþe grete & smale:
 Vor-þan þat heom þuhte þat heo hadde
 þe vle ouer-come, for-þan heo gradde.

1638 þer, þ or wen. — 1640 þu inserted. — 1641 þ yelpest. —
 1653 blank space after word. — 1658 a non.

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an sungeŋ al-swa uale wise,

an blisse was among þe rise.

1665 Riȝt swa me gred þe manne a schame,

þat taueleþ & for-leost þat gome.

þeos hule, þo heo þis iherde,

‘Hauestu,’ heo seide, ‘ibanned ferde?’ Fol. 245 r,

an wultu, wreche, wið me fiȝte? col. 2.

1670 Nai, nai! nauestu none miȝte!

Hwat gredeþ þeo þat hider come?

Me þuncþ þu ledest ferde [to me].

Ȝe schule wite, ar Ȝe fleo heonne,

hwuch is þe strenþe of mine kunne:

1675 for þeo þe haueþ bile ihoked,

an cliures [s]charpe & wel icroked,

alle heo beoþ of mine kun-rede,

an walde come ȝif ich bede.

þe seolfe coc, þat wel can fiȝte,

1680 he mot mid me holde mid riȝte,

for [boþe] we habbeþ steuene briȝte,

an sitteþ under weolcne bi niȝte.

Schille ich an utest uppen ow grede,

ich shal swo stronge ferde lede,

1685 þat ower proude schal aualle;

a tort ne ȝiue ich for ow alle:

1663 uale, later u on erasure. — 1665 swa, wen on u. — 1670 first na, i above; no, ne above. — 1672 þuncþ, second þ on ? u; tome. — 1676 charpe. — 1681 bo þe. — 1682 three up and down strokes for cn; Wr., St., uc, Str. cn.

- & sungen al-so uale wise,
 þat blisse wes among þe ryse.
 1665 Riht so me gred þe monne a schame,
 þat taueleþ & for-leost þat gome.
 þeos vle, þo heo þis iherde,
 ‘Hauestu,’ heo seyde, ‘ibanned ferde?
 & wiltu, wrecche, wiþ me vyhte?
 1670 Na, nay! nauestu none [m]ihte!
 Hwat gredeþ heo þat hider come? Fol. 241 r, col. 1.
 Me þinkþ þu ledest ferde to me.
 Ye schulle wite, ar ye fleo heonne,
 Hwuch is þe strengþe of myne kunne:
 1675 Vor þeo þat haueþ bile ihoked,
 & clyures scharpe & wel i-croked,
 Alle heo beoþ of myne kunrede,
 & wolde cumen if ich bede.
 þe seolue cok, þat wel can vihte,
 1680 He mot myd me holde wiþ rihte,
 Vor [boþe] we habbe stefne brihte,
 & sitteþ vnder welkne bi nyhte.
 Schulle ic up eu on vt[est] grede,
 Ich schal swo stronge verde lede,
 1685 þat oure prude schal a-ualle;
 A tord ne yeue ic for eu alle:

1670 Mihte. — 1681 beo þat or þer. — 1682 -lkne bi nyhte
 in perhaps later hand. — 1683 vterest, crook for er in perhaps later
 hand. — 1685 þa, t inserted.

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ne schal, ar hit beo fulliche eue,
a wreche feþer on ow bi-leaue.

Ah hit was unker uore-ward,

1690 þo we come hider-ward,

þat we þarto holde scholde

þar riht dom us ȝiue wolde.

Wultu nu breke fore-ward ?

Ich wene dom þe þing to hard:

1695 for þu ne darst domes abide,

þu wult nu, wreche, fiȝte & chide.

Ȝot ich ow alle wolde rede,

ar [ich] ut-heste uppon ow grede,

þat ower fihtlac letetþ beo,

1700 an ginneþ raþe a-wei fleo.

For, bi þe cliures þat ich bere !

ȝef ȝe abideþ mine here,

Fol. 245 v, col. 1.

ȝe schule on oþer wise singe,

an a-cursi alle fiȝtinge:

1705 vor nis of ow non so kene,

þat durre abide mine on-sene.'

Þeos hule spac wel baldeliche,

for þah heo nadde swo hwatliche

i-fare after hire here,

1710 heo walde ne oþeles ȝefe answere

þe niȝtegale mid swucche worde.

For moni man mid speres orde

- Ne schal, ar hit beo fullich eue,
 A wrecche weþere on eu bileue.
 Ah hit wes vnker uoreward,
 1690 þo we comen hyder-ward,
 þat we þar-to holden scholde
 þar riht dom vs yeue wolde.
 Wultu nu breke foreward?
 Ic wene dom þe þinkþ to hard:
 1695 Vor þu ne darst domes abyde,
 þu wilt nu, wreche, fihte & chide.
 Yet ich eu wolde alle rede,
 Ar ich vthrest vp eu grede,
 þat eur fihtlak leteþ beo,
 1700 & gynneþ raþe ayeyn fleo.
 Vor, bi þe clyures þat ic bere!
 If ye abideþ myne here,
 Ye schulleþ an oþer wise singe
 & cursy alle fihtinge:
 1705 Vor nys of ou non so kene,
 þat durre abide myn onsene.
 Þeos vle spak wel baldelyche,
 Vor þah heo nadde so hwatliche
 Iuare after hire here,
 1710 Heo wolde napeles yeue answere Fol. 241 r, col. 2.
 þe [n]ihtegale myd sweche worde.
 For monymon myd speres orde

- haueþ lutle strenche, & mid his [s] chelde,
 ah neopeles in one felde,
 1715 þurh belde worde an mid ilete,
 deþ his iuo for arehþe swete.
 þe wranne, for heo cuþe singe,
 þar com in þare [moregeiinge]
 to helpe þare niȝtegale:
 1720 for þah heo hadde steuene smale,
 heo hadde gode þ[ro]te & schille,
 an fale manne song a wille.
 þe wranne was wel wis iholde,
 vor þeg heo nere ibred a wolde,
 1725 ho was itoȝen among [mannedne],
 an hire wisdom brohte þenne:
 heo miȝte speke hwar heo walde,
 to-uore þe king þah heo scholde.
 ‘Lustep,’ heo cwaþ, ‘lateþ me speke.
 1730 Hwat! wulle ȝe þis pes to-breke,
 an do þanne [kinge] swuch schame?
 ȝe[t] nis he nouþer ded ne lame,
 Hunke schal i-tide harm & schonde,
 ȝef ȝe doþ griþ-bruche on his londe.
 1735 Lateþ beo, & beoþ isome,
 an fareþ riht to o[w]er dome, Fol. 245 v, col. 2.

1713 chelde. — 1718 more gennge or geiinge, *no dots, first two up and down strokes unlike second two*. — 1721 þorte. — 1724 at bottom of fol. 245 v, col. 1, after l. 1735. — 1725 mann enne. — 1731 þanne swuch. — 1732 ȝe. — 1736 oper, *no dot*.

- Haueþ lutle strengþe, & mid his schelde,
 Ah naþeles in one felde,
 1715 þurh belde worde & myd ilete,
 Deþ is iuo for arehþe swete.
 þe wrenne, for heo cuþe singe,
 þar com in þare moreweninge
 To helpe þare nyhtegale:
 1720 Vor [þeih] heo hadde stefne smale,
 Heo hadde gode þrote & schille,
 & fale monne song a wille.
 þe wrenne wes wel wis iholde,
 Vor þeih heo nere i-bred a wolde,
 1725 Heo wes itowen among mankunne,
 & hire wisdom brouhte þenne:
 Heo myhte speke hwar heo wolde,
 To-fore þe kinge þah heo scholde.
 ‘Lustep,’ heo queþ, ‘leteþ me speke.
 1730 Hwat! wille ye þis pays to-breke,
 & do þanne [kinge] such schome?
 Yet nys heo nouþer ded ne lome,
 Hunke schal i-tyde harm & schonde,
 If we doþ gryþbruche on his lond.
 1735 Leteþ beo, & beoþ i-some,
 & fareþ riht to eure dome,

1718 in, contraction very like &. — 1720 Vor heo. — 1725 amg,
 o and dash above mg. — 1731 þanne such.

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an lateþ dom þis plaid to-breke,
al swo hit was erur bi-speke.'

171 'Ich an wel,' cwað þe niȝtegeale,

140 'ah, wranne, nawt for þire tale,
ah do for mire lah-fulnesse.

Ich nolde þat unriht-fulnesse
me at þen ende ouer-kome:
ich nam of-drad of none dome.

1745 Bi-hote ich habbe, soþ hit is,
þat Maister Nichole, þat is wis,
bi-tuxen vs deme schulde,
an ȝe[t] ich wene þat he wule.
Ah [w]ar mihte we hine finde?'

1750 þe wranne sat in ore linde;
'Hwat! nuȝte ȝe,' cwaþ heo, 'his hom?
He wunep at Portes-hom,
at one tune ine Dor-sete,
bi þare see in ore ut-lete:

1755 þar he demep manie riȝte dom,
an diht & writ mani wisdom,
an þurh his muþe & þurh his honde
hit is þe betere in-to Scot-londe.

To seche hine is lihtlich þing,

1760 he naueþ bute one woning.

þat [is] bischopen muchel schame,
an alle [þ]an þat of his nome

1748 ȝef. — 1749 þar, no dot. — 1761 his. — 1762 þan, þ
doned.

& leteþ *dom* þis playd to-breke,

Al so hit wes erure bi-speke.'

'Ich vnne wel,' queþ þe [n]ihtegale,

1740 'Ah, wrenne, nouht for þine tale,

Ac do for myre lauhfulnesse.

Ic nolde þat vnrihtfulnesse

Me at þen [ende ouer-come]:

Ic nam of-dred of none dome.

1745 Bi-hote ic habbe, soþ hit is,

þat Mayster Nichole, þat is wis,

Bi-twihen [us] deme schulle,

& yet ic wene þat he wulle.

Ah [w]ar myhte we hine fynde?'

Fol. 241 v,
col. 1.

1750 þe wrenne sat in hore lynde;

'Hwat! [nuhte ye],' quap heo, 'his hom?

Heo wunep at Portes-hom,

At one tune in Dorsete,

Bi þare see in ore vt-lete:

1755 þar he demep mony riht dom,

& diht & wryt mony wisdom,

& þurh his muþe & þurh his honde

Hit is þe betere in-to Scotlonde.

To seche hyne is lyhtlych þing,

1760 He naueþ buten o wunyng.

þat is biscopen muchel schame,

& alle þan þat of his nome

1739 Nihtegale. — 1743 ende me ouer come. — 1747 eu deme.
— 1749 þar, þ or wen. — 1751 Hwat Mihte lyet.

habbeþ i-hert, & of his dede.

Hwi nulleþ hi nimen heom to rede,

1765 þat he were mid heom ilome

for teche heom of his wisdome,

an ȝiue him rente auale stude,

þat he miȝte heom ilome be mide?'

‘ Certes,’ cwab þe hule, ‘ þat is soð:

1770 beos riche men wel muche mis-doð, Fol. 246 r,

pat letet pane gode mon,

col. 1.

þat of so feole þinge con,

an ziuep rente wel misliche,

an of him letes wel liht-liche.

1775 Wið heore cunne heo beoþ mildre,

an zeueþ rente litle childre:

swo heore wit hi demþ adwole.

pat euer abid Maistre Nichole.

Ah ute we pah to him fare,

1780 for þar is unker dom al þare.'

‘Do we,’ þe niʒtegalē seide:

‘ah [w]a schal unker speche rede,

an telle to-uore unker deme?'

‘par-of ich schal þe wel i-cweme,’

1785 cwap þe houle; 'for al, ende of orde,

telle ich con word after worde:

an 3ef þe þincþ þat ich mis-rempe,

pu stond azein & [do me] crempe.'

1763 i hert. . — 1766 theche, *first h deleted*. — 1782 þa, *no dot*. — 1788 dome.

- Habbep iherd, and of his dede.
 Hwi nulleþ hi nymen heom to rede,
 1765 þat he were myd heom ilome
 Vor teche heom of his wis-dome,
 & yeue him rente on vale stude,
 þat he myhte ilome heom beo myde ?'
 ' Certes,' quap þe vle, ' þat is soþ:
 1770 þeos riche men [m]uchel mys-dopþ,
 þat leteþ þane gode man,
 þat of so fele þinge can,
 & yeueþ rente wel [m]islyche,
 & of him leteþ wel lyhtliche.
 1775 Wiþ heore kunne heo beoþ [m]ildre,
 & yeueþ rente lutle childre:
 So heore wit hi demep a-dwole.
 þat euer abit Mayster Nichole.
 Ah vte we þah to hym fare,
 1780 Vor þa[r] is vnker dom al yare.'
 ' Do we,' þe [n]ihtegale seyde:
 ' Ah hwo schal vnker speche rede,
 & telle to-vore vnker d[e] me ? '
 ' þar-of ic schal þe wel iqueme,'
 1785 Queþ þe vle ; ' for al, ende of orde,
 Telle ic con word after worde : Fol. 241 v, col. 2.
 & if þe þinkþ þat ic mis-rempe,
 þu stond ayeyn and do me crempe.'

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Mid þisse worde forþ hi ferdn,
1790 al bute here & bute uerde,
to Portes-ham þer heo bi-come.
Ah hu heo spedde of heore dome,
ne chan ich eu namore telle :
her nis namore of þis spelle.

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Mid þisse worde forþ hi ferden,
1790 Al bute here and bute verde,
To Portes-ham þer heo bicomē.
Ah hw heo spedde of heore dome,
Ne can ic eu namore telle:
Her nys namore of þisse spelle.
Explicit.

Notes

WHEN the meaning of both MSS. is the same, to avoid repetition the form of MS. Cott. is quoted in these notes. Sk. or Skeat refers to Skeat's edition of Morris' *Specimens of Early English*, Part I.; Str., to Stratmann's edition of the poem; Wr., to Wright's edition; Stev. or St., to Stevenson's edition; Mätz. or Mätzner, to Mätzner's *Altenglische Sprachproben*; Brad. Strat. Dict., to Bradley's edition of Stratmann's *Middle English Dictionary*; Cook's Sievers, or Sievers, to Cook's 2nd edition of Sievers' *Grammar of Old English*; N. E. Dict., to the *New English Dictionary*.

1. At 221-4, 255-8, 349-52, 455-8, 1679-82, also, the quatrain on one rhyme occurs for the couplet, with good effect. — *Feminine* are preferred to *masculine* rhymes in a proportion of about 715 to 182, or 4 to 1. — *Dale* is rather Scandinavian than O. E., the O. E. word being *denu*. A feminine form occurs in Dan. *dal*, m. f., Corn. *dol*, Manx *dayll*. Probably the f. *-ere* of *sumere*, 'certain,' is without regard to gender: cp. 17 *ore*. Sk. and Brad. Strat. Dict. take *one sumere*, 'a certain' < O. E. *sum*.

2. C *suþe*. *þ* dotted and so like *wen*, as in this MS. at 171, 638, 758, 967, 1305, 1442, 1479, 1583, 1762.

5. The normal line of the poem contains four verse stresses, each coinciding with word-accent and usually with rhetorical accent. The normal types are found in verses of 8 and 9 syllables:

C 5 þat plaít was stif & stárc & strórg,

C 10 þat álre-wórste þát hi wúste.

When the initial light syllable is omitted, the normal types are verses of 7 and 8 syllables:

C 1056 Liím and grínew, wél eiwát,

C 943 Sél[d]e éndeð wél þe lóþe.

In between 195 and 200 verses (e. g. 26, 42, 63, 64, 70, 71, 83, 87, 91) the initial light syllable is not employed. This number

does not include lines opening with a trochee followed immediately by an iambus : e. g.

423 Grúcching & lúring him 6oþ ráde.

Verses of this kind are very common (e. g. 38, C 47, 52, 78, 80, 105, 120, 128, 130, 132, 134, 161, C 163, 165, 168, 181, 184, 193) though in some cases personal preference in placing the first accent *may* cause a reading of two iambic feet : e. g.

C 34 Me is þe wís þat ich þe só

48 þez ich ne cúnne of writelíng.

Examination of all verses in the poem with their context will lead to opinion that the poet had in mind generally the trochaic opening in such cases. Everywhere in his line he placed his stresses according to the sense of the passage, using the accentuation and stress that would bring out the sense, and did not stress syllables merely for regularity of sound.

6. *softe*. In the poem elision affects mainly final weak -e : e. g. 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, 48, 51, 58, 60, 63, 75, 88. Cf. Notes 14, 121. As usually, elision of *e* in *ne* is marked by contraction.

8. *wole*. After the Conquest *wen* was displaced more or less by *uu*, *wv*, or *w* (cf. Morsbach, *M. E. Gram.* § 10. Anm. 1), and so the forms were often confused. In *The Owl* *w* not infrequently = *uv* or *vu*, as in C 31, 35, C 236. The *o* may be due to careless writing of *e* in C or the original.

11. C *opere*. Sk. and Wr. add *s*; Str. prefers *opres*.

13. J þo < O. E. *pā* ; *spræce*, acc. f. — As far as indications show, nouns for the most part keep their O. E. gender in *The Owl*. Modifiers and reference words indicate agreement with O. E. gender in the following lines: Masc. 303-7, 373, 345, 831, 811-2, 1097, 1680, 680, 21, 513, 1238, 1152, 1196, 1374, C 1300 (French 111, 336); Fem. 439, 1053, 414, 318, 1378-80, 443, 70, C 949, 545, 1718, 914, 915, 429, 342, 1650-2, C 1740, 1741, C 1750 (Fr. Lat. C 1116); Neut. J 1410, 233, 128, 1440, 999, 641-5, 774, 230, 690, 166, 946, 1649-66. — A tendency toward adoption of 'natural' gender is seen at 344, 1159, 356, J 949, 28, J 1300, 168, 1434-8, 1236, 360, 1717, 121, 125, 1344, J 1740, J 1652. The tendency in the poem to have f. acc. and gen. sing. and n. nom. acc. pl. take masc. forms, bears

witness to the confusion of gender that was spreading in English of the time.

14. *one*, dissyllabic. Hiatus is frequent in the poem: e. g. 17, 40, 66, 86, 92, 103, 184, 186, 294, 311. In the last five cases hiatus is found at the *cæsura*, a not uncommon occurrence; usually, however, elision may be supposed at the *cæsura*: e. g. 185, 226, 276, 390. Cf. Note 6. — *breche* [Mätz. II. 'Cf dial. break (Brache) ?' Brad. Strat. Dict. 'a fallow field']: adopted by Str. though he notes that *J beche* < *baeche* 'valley' is perhaps correct. Sk. adopts *J beche*, translates, 'In a corner of a valley,' and refers to *baeche* in *Lazamon* 5644 and *baeches* in *Piers Plowman* C viii. 159.

16. *þar*, *þat*: probably from similarity between the abbreviations for *þar*, *þat*; cf. Note 1219.

17. *ore* < O. E. f. dat. *ānre*, though O. E. *hege* is masc. Cf. Gloss. and Note 1.

19. *ho*, *he*, are interchangeable in both MSS., though *J* has *heo* for *ho*. Cf. Notes 21, 1374.

20. Some doubt exists whether to treat the descending forms of O. E. *fela* as indecl. neut. with gen., or as adj. with the case of the noun. The former construction is preferred in this edition.

21. MS. C *het*: *h* carelessly written is much like *b*. — O. E. *dræam*, 'joyful sound, music' is masc. Cf. *J heo* 23, and Note 19. — Two or more unstressed syllables occur very frequently between two stresses, where usually but one unstressed syllable would be found. This is met with in all parts of the verse: e. g. 21, 1280, 198; 64, 119; 882, 1127; 283, 915. Almost invariably the extra unstressed syllables are final syllables, unaccented initial syllables, or monosyllables of minor importance in the sentence, and are therefore but little emphasized in pronunciation and are uttered rapidly: e. g. one inflectional ending *-e*, *-est*, *-ep*, *-es*, *-en*, *-er* (*-ur*), or unstressed *-e*, *-er*, *-el*, *-en*, 1, 2, C 9, C 11, 114, 119, 252, 772, 1250, 440, 271, 99, 39, C 267, 76, C 75, 130, 83, 84, 568, 286, C 916; words or syllables one or both other than inflectional, one begins with a vowel C 123, 130, 327, one begins with *h* 205, 404, 52, 698, one ends with a vowel 65, 160, 795, 1476, 62, 346, one is an unemphatic monosyllable 284, 441, 635, 176, 150, 636, 1063, 187. As the verses cited show, the above phenomena rarely occur

singly. — How far the author had in mind syncope and apocope in such cases as above, cannot be settled at all. The not infrequent occurrence between two stresses of two unstressed syllables of such character that syncope or apocope cannot be practised, indicate that the poet trusted (very far more often than some Procrustean methods of scansion would allow) to the *natural* pronunciation that would be given for sense. A great deal of the melody and of the characteristic effect of this poem comes from this free, natural pronunciation, emphasis for sense and slurring or (better) rapid utterance of unimportant syllables.

26. C þo < O. E. f. þeo for sēo : cf. Note 13.

29. Rhyme of a word with itself in a compound occurs at 109-10, 127-8, 159-60, 231-2, 249-50, 285-6, 323-4, 339-40, 345-6, 769-70, 919-20, 1017-8, 1163-4, 1177-8, 1363-4, 1751-2, 1755-6. — 'Perfect' rhyme of last member of a compound with last member of a compound occurs at 144, 212, 256, 376, 646, 908, 910, 1690. — 'Perfect' rhyme of words of the same stem occurs at 29-30, 137-8, 153-4, 367-8, 391-2, 435-6, 725-6, 929-30, 939-40, 967-8, 1233-4, 1499-1500. — 'Perfect' rhyme of a word with itself or its negative occurs at 21-2, 267-8, 785-6, 811-2, 1525-6. — 'Perfect' rhyme of a derivative syllable with itself occurs at 491-2, 581-2, 613-4, 853-4, 869-70, 899-900, 1139-40, 1281-2, 1399-1400, 1423-4, 1707-8, 1773-4. — Cf. 35-6, 97-8, ? 115-6, 533-4, 603-4, 895-6, 1113-4, 1445-6.

34. *wrs.* Frequently *u* after *w* is omitted in the MSS. : e. g. C 406, 896, 499, 228, 589, 614, 408 ; C J 572, 400, 846, 1173, 1099, 852 ; J 505, 573-5, 548, 769-70, 1158, 1100, 722, 793. So after *w*, *i* is dropped in C 54, C 440 ; and in like position, *e* in J 203, J 1321 (*werctche*).

37. *min*, *mi*, *my*. Almost invariably the scribes of C and J used *min*, *pin*, the art. and num. *on*, *an*, and the prep. *on*, only before a vowel or *h*, and dropped the *-n* only before a consonant : cf. 25, 82, 94, 103, 45, 54, 4, 311, 73. — In many cases in this poem *assonance* seems due not to the original but to use by the scribes of permissible spellings in the second verse that are not used in the first verse, or to the use of a form of a word that *assonates* when there was at hand a form of the word that would make good

end rhyme: e. g. 883 *iborze*, *sorwe*, 37 *tonge*, *ibrunge*, where *sorze*, *tunge* were at hand and consistent. For assonance cf. couplets 476, 502, 506, 548, 642, 632, 660, 678, 688, 700, 792, 856, 884, 1030, 1320, 1388, 1460, 1532, 1588, 1652, 1748, 1790; 38, 66, 274, 284, 322, 328, 370, 416, 444, 460, 564, 656, 728, 832, 836, 850, 898, 916, 934, 938, 954, 978, 1002, 1022, 1046, 1050, 1072, 1076, 1228, 1236, 1262, 1284, 1326, 1380, 1406, 1456, 1464, 1468, 1492, 1506, 1556, 1584, 1608, 1654, 1666, 1674, 1728, 1762, 1768. — Cf. Note 63.

40. Professor Flügel calls attention to the fact that *J howelynge*, 'howling,' appears to be the oldest certain quotation for the word, and that it is not in *N. E. Dict.* The following derivative suffixes may bear verse ictus in the poem, and bear such in rhyme at the lines noted: *-are* 1186; *-ere* ? 807-8; *les(se)* 691-2, 747, 881; *-esse* 369, 491-2, 899-900, 1228, 1399-1400, 1405, 1415-16; *-lich(e)* 315, 401-2, 853-4, 1139-40, 1281-2, 1423-4, 1707-8, 1773-4; *-hede* 162, 351, 514, 581-2, 683, 838, 1219, 1265; *-ing(e)* 40, 48, 311, 446, 560, 576, 613-4, 626, 744, 772, 795, 855 (cp. *J*), 869-70, 875, 889, 901, 914, 981, 986, 1001, 1035, 1171, 1182, 1213, 1336, 1340, 1447, 1598, 1704, 1718, 1760.

41. *J* for, 'because,' not so good sense as *C fort < forte < for tō*, 'until,' which never occurs in *J*: cp. 332, 432.

48. *Wen* is usually used for *w* in *C*, and is commonly undotted (and so like *p*), as in 48, 100, 106, 111 (2), 113, 125 (3), 126 (2), 138 (2), 151 (2), 164, 165 (1), 187, 196 (4), 198, etc.

52. *só hit bitide*, 'may it so happen.' Slurring may be supposed in such cases: cp. 339, 383, also 73, 277, 994.

53. &. Skeat translates 'An (if)' as from Norse *enda*. But 53 continues sense of 51, 52 being an exclamation thrown in.

54. The context tempts one to have *wise* = 'song' at several places in the poem: 519, 1663, 1703, and Note 748. Cf. Toller, *A. S. Dict.*, at end of *wis*, *wise*: cp. Icel. *vísa*, 'a stanza.' *Oper* is commonly not inflected in the poem. Of course *wise* may be dat.; 'in a different manner.'

57. *J yit* indicates that the original read *wit*, and marks confusion there in appearance of *wen* and *y*, which dotted or undotted were written very much alike. On confusion and difficulty concern-

ing *p*, *z*, *þ*, *y*, *wen*, cf. Notes and MSS. Var. 106, 180, 184, 187, 215, 248, 272, 296, 309, 439, 614, 670, 689, 981, 1055, 1125, 1256, 1405, 1428, 1447, 1469, 1566, 1638. This confusion and difficulty occurring simultaneously at many of these passages in C and J points to a likeness in the forms in the two originals, or it points to confusion in the mind of the scribe or scribes of the originals of C and J, or in the mind of the scribes of C and J. In view of other facts (cf. Notes 805, 812, 411, 707, 1711, 1388-90) it is perhaps best to suppose confusion and ambiguity in a common original of C and J.

62. C *se*: probably a clerical error. *se*, *si* are found for the article *þe* in Kentish (e.g. *Sermons*, O. E. Misc. pp. 26-7-8, 30), and might be by analogy transferred to the pronoun.

63-64. Irregular rhymes in the poem are due in great part to errors of the scribes, to inconsistency in spelling, or to the adoption (apparently by copyists) of permitted forms that make poor rhyme: e. g. couplets at 103, 133, 143, 145, 335, 343, 405, 613, 707, 837, 759, 921, 1063, 1157, 1303, 1337, 1329, 1383, 1413, 1587, 1641, 1687, 1781, 1503. Note 291, 303, 633, 807. In the above (as with *ou*, *u*, *ey*, *ay*, *ei*, *ai*, *ē*) often the irregularity is but to the eye. — 'Gliding' rhyme may be seen at 278, 284, 378, 416, 632, 808, 916, 1158, 1162, 1240.

69. *þe sulue mose*, 'even the titmouse,' 'the very titmouse,' slight and timid though she be.

78. C *mist*: J *myht* more regular. Cp. J 353, J 1113: cf. Note 642, and Morsbach *M. E. Gram.* p. 37.

81. C *clackes* may be due to Northern *-es* through Midland; but is rather due to carelessness of the scribe (cf. Note 209). Cp. *wones* 985, *bodes* 1155.

85. *frogge*, regarded as food (cp. 146), like *snailles*, etc.: *þe*, dat. after *to*.

86. The presence of this line in J and the fact that the scribe of J is not happy in his emendations, indicate that J is not a copy of C. Cp. 770-71: cf. Note 1195.

88. 'Are for thy nature (kind) and for thy right (desert, due)': cp. 85.

102. Note apparent confusion of gender in 102 and the following lines: cf. Notes 13, 19.

103. *stele* : cf. Note 550.

107. Cf. Note 19.

110. J stressed for sense (*in þe ȝt hāluē*, 'in the outer part') makes poor rhythm, and for rhythm had better bear stress on *h* and *hāluē*. — From the use in O. E. verse of the stave of type C ($x \angle \angle x$) came down into Mid. Eng. and thence into Mod. Eng. verse the practice of introducing a *clash of accents* — a means of varying and strengthening metrical effect that almost all the great masters of English verse have employed very extensively. The author of *The Owl* handed on the clash of accents (along with the syncopated foot) by frequent happy employment of it in all the positions where it could be used : cf. (1) 1621, 543, 1111, 1190, 1197, C 1432, 1450, 1621, 1670, 1687, 497, 823, 1340 (poor), 1409, 1453, 596, C 1399, 1644, 689, 895, 821, 747, 825, 855, 976, 1008; (2) 21, 111, 176, 105, 206, 1064, 237, 507, 49, 173, 100, 950, 787, 864, 97, 1533, 349, 345, 468, 658, 1162, 599, 716, 790, 1521; (3) C 156, 765, C 123, 131, 1731, 295, C 208, 286, 563, 236, 1479, 321, 333, 373, 753; etc. Cf. Note 311.

115. MS. C *wiste*, probably for J *custe*, 'manner,' the scribe's eye having fallen on 116. Rhyme *custe* is not so good, but sense is clear. The orig. had probably *custe*, *twiste* : cp. 9-10. Str. adopts *custe*. — J dat. -e avoids clash of accents.

116. J *seggeþ*, imp. pl. *ep*, more consistent with 113.

118. C *o3er*, influenced by neighboring sounds.

120. Note confusion of gender : cf. Note 13.

121. J *vyrste*, 'first' (O. E. *fyrest*) or 'farthest' (O. E. *fer-rest*), not so good for sense or rhythm as C. — The article and the demonstrative *þe* commonly may have -e elided ; e. g. in 797, 935, 1293, 1769, 1785 : but pers. prons. and impers. *me* are usually not affected ; e. g. in 177, 201, 262, 402, 1365, 1564, 1702. Cf. Notes 6, 14.

124. C *brid*, neuter : O. E. masc. Cp. J 119, 120.

125. J *hym* : dat. for acc. *hit* illustrates the general tendency of dat. of pronouns to displace the acc., — a tendency which was checked in the case of *hit*. Observe that in this poem the dat. for acc. usually occurs after compounded verbs. Cf. Notes 308, 704.

126. C *þar*, '[to a place] where,' J *þat*, 'so that,' point to

like abbreviations for *par* and *pat* in the original, or to resemblance of *r* to *t* or *t* to *r*. Cf. Notes 1106, 970.

129. Clash of last two stresses, as in 131, 132, C 136. Cf. Note 110.

134. J dat. *-e* gives better metre.

135. MS. C from : cf. Note 881.

142. Sk. 'Right as [if] one were twanging a shrill harp.' O. E. *griellan*, 'provoke, irritate,' cf. *agrulle* 1110.

148. *abisemar* : prep. c. dat. 'in scorn, mockery,' *-e* being lost ; or acc. 'a scornful thing, an insult.' Cp. 1311.

151. J *hweþer* : inter. pron. with *wnker*, 'which of us two,' clearer than C contracted *ware*. — The dual pronouns disappeared early. In *The Owl* occur dat. *hunke* 1733 ; and *wnker* as gen. 151, as possessive 552, 993, 1689, 1780-82-83.

153. The nightingale replies. — J frequently omits the adv. *wel* : cp. 170, 346, 376, 419, 546, etc.

161. J *þine* : older, but *-e* ? elided before the vowel ; cp. 169.

170. Cf. Note 153.

171. MS. C *wriste* : cf. Note 2.

176. *Wel fyht þat wel flyhp*, *Proverbs of Hendyng*, st. 10, Harl. MS. A like saw is ascribed to Alfred at 1074. Proverbs are ascribed to Alfred at 235, 294, 299, 349, 569, 685, 697, 761, 942, 1074, 1223, 1269. At 176, 289, 1037 Alfred is not mentioned. It is frequently difficult to determine if expressions used in the poem are original with the author or are based on some well-known saw ; for the author's expressions very frequently approach the proverb form without a reference to them as proverbs and without exact extant proverb parallels. Again, it is difficult to say how much of a declared proverb is supposed to be quoted and how much is the expansion of the author. — From the expression at 235, 294, 350, one may conclude that the poet took care to support his proverbs by written, not merely oral, authority. — After an examination of the proverbs ascribed to Alfred (Paul and Braune's *Beiträge*, I. 258), Wülcker concludes, 'Das ergebnis gegenwärtiger untersuchung ist also : Es waren im 12. jh. mehrere spruchsammlungen unter Aelfreds namen in England im umlaufe.' Cf. *Lazamon*, v. 6312. — It is odd that but one direct parallel (cf. Notes 291, 667) to the sayings attributed to Alfred is found in the extant *Proverbs*

of *Alfred* (pub. Kemble, *Dialogues of Salomon and Saturnus*, Aelfric Soc., 1848; Morris, *Old Eng. Misc.*, E. E. T. S. Pub. 49). Three parallels (cf. Notes 176, 687, 1271) are found in the *Proverbs of Hendyng* (pub. Kemble, op. cit.; Varnhagen, *Anglia* IV. 180; quotations from *Hendyng* in these notes are from Sk. *Spec. of Early Eng.*). Cf. Wülcker, Paul and Braune's *Beiträge*, I. 240-62; Skeat, *Trans. Lond. Phil. Soc.*, 1897; Morris, *O. E. Misc.* It is, of course, very probable that a number of collections now lost were extant at the time of *The Owl*, and that some or all of these were ascribed to Alfred. Moreover, it is probable that the poet of *The Owl* to a greater or less degree followed a general tendency of the time to ascribe to Alfred popular wisdom uttered in colloquial discourse.

177. J omits *wæ*, and spoils metre. — Note omission of imper. pl. *-eþ* when pronoun follows.

178. C *un-werste*. Metathesis occurs in C at 223, 249, 1218, 1576, also.

180. C *ysome*: *y* somewhat like *wen*; cf. Note 57. Str. emends to *isome*; Sk. does the same and quotes MS. *wisdom* (!); Wr. and St. print *ylome*. Cp. O. E. *gesām*, 'in harmony.'

184. As *f* in C *fōze* is much like long *s*, the orig. of C may have had *sōpe*, 'sooth, truth,' like J (for confusion of *p*, *b*, *wen*, *z*, *y*, cf. Note 57): but, as Professor Flügel suggests, it is more likely that *fōze*, not understood by the scribe of J, is the O. E. *fōg*, and the whole phrase is a M. E. parallel to Germ. *mit Fug und Recht*, cf. Mätzner, *Wb.*

190. C *paref*: made dissyllabic by influence of neighboring *par of*? — Skeat (*Trans. Lond. Phil. Soc.* 1897) calls attention to the insertion of *e* after *r* in a number of M. E. MSS., ascribing it to the French scribes and ultimately to a feeling that the Eng. *r* was trilled stronger than Fr. *r*. Insertion of *e* after *r* is found in C *areu* 1498, *hareme areme* 1161-2, *harem* (J *c tem*) 1260, *oreue* 1157; C J *bareȝ bareh* 408, *areȝ areh* 407, *areȝpe arehpe* 404, 1716; J *pureh, bureh* 765-6; C J *mure*(*z, h*)*pe* 355, 341, 718, 897, 1402, 1448.

193. J *worde*, 'of speech': in view of 192 *worde*, not so good as *dome*.

199. J *bihouhte*. Error for *bipouhte*? Cf. Mätz. *Wb.*

'*behozien, bihozien*, ags. *behogian, sollicitum esse* Bosw. : bedacht sein.'

204. J *gent* drops elided *-e*.

205. J *nupe* points to the form *supe* in orig.

209. J *N* : an instance of J scribe's frequent carelessness ; cp. MSS. Var. and Notes 223, 226, 321, 358, 513, 782, 917, 983, 1019, 1198, 1641.

211. C *him*, if correct, could mean 'to, for himself.' The scribe's eye fell on *him* just below in 212? J *nw*, 'now,' is probably the correct reading.

215. The J scribe seems not to have understood *zare* (O. E. *gearu*) or its original : cp. 296, 488, 860.

231. C 'to which misdoing is dear' ; J 'that loves misdoing.'

234. 'Is common (current) in the mouths of many men.'

Cf. Note 14.

236. 'He (a person) shuns that which (cp. l. 218) knows him [to be] foul' : (cf. Note 8).

239. From the use of J *ſ* for *an* (cp. J 1718) one might conclude that the orig. of J had frequently *an* for *and* or *ſ*, and that the scribe was accustomed to change *an* to *ſ* and made a slip here. At 1476, 1489 the C scribe met a *T* or *t* that looked much like the character for *ſ*, and being accustomed to see *an* and *ſ* interchangeable and probably (though less than J scribe) accustomed, further, to displace one by the other, wrote *an o* for *To* — or, as he supposed, for *ſ o*. From the same causes C scribe wrote *ſ honge* for *an honge*, at 1195 (cf. Note).

242. C 'boughs nor trunk' (O. E. *strind*, 'generation, stock') : corrected to *bow ne rind*, 'bough nor bark.' J *bouh of lynd*, 'bough of linden,' is probably too specific to fit or to be more than an attempt, like others of J, to avoid a difficulty. — C *sichst* = J *syst*, 'seest' : cp. *i sichst*, 1225, 1230, 1232. Note that in C 50, 367, *e* is much like *c*. Here the orig. reading may be *siechst* < O. E. *siehist*.

246. 'Who sees nothing to any good end, with any good result.'

248. Were it not for *at prenche* C J 814, one would feel that C *at prenche*, J *a prenche* were probably due to similarity of *p* and *wan* in the originals (cf. Notes 57, 1125, 1566). Str. and Mätz. *Wb.* adopt *atwrenche*, 'to twist away, to escape.'

249. C þane, J þene, 250 þane < O. E. acc. m. þone, L. W. S. þæne, þene, 'the,' as at 1602, 1771: cp. dem. adj. at 1097, and pron. at 1346.

256. J hote drops -n of infinitive: cp. 262 *bas*. The infin. generally ends in -e in both MSS., but more frequently in J. The survivals of infin. -en or -n are found in 77, C 1195, 1199, 1131, 150, 988, 977, C 989, C 256, C 383, 529, 1190, 669, 1764, 709, 910, 78, C 678, 953, 987, 1066, J 1281, J 1249, J 1691, 351, C 672, C 1368, C 1018, 490, C 978, C 486, 1508, 39, C 1326, C 408, 1039, 1341, C 262, 666, 724, 1280, C 1489, C 932, C 1195, C 1198, C 1346, C 1554, 159, C 382, 1053, 1510, 214, 669, 952.

258. spale: Sk. 'a spell, a turn of work [*sic*] for a short time.' One may accept 'splint, a cleft stick in which the tongue is caught.' 'Let thy tongue have a splint (be fastened and so held still).' Cf. *Prompt. Parv.* 'spalle or chyppe (spolle) *Quisquilia*, assula'; J. Wright, *Dial. Dict.* s. v. *spale*, *spail*, *spelch*.

266. nich ne nai: 'Thereto say I not, "Not I" ("No") nor "Nay."' For O. E. *nic*, *nicc*, cf. Sievers, 332, n. 2.

270. scharp. Loss of pl. -e seems to mark elision before a vowel, though the loss may be but through the general tendency to clip or omit final unstressed syllables. The loss is more frequent in J than in C: e. g. in 204, 293, 537, 705, 752. Cf. Notes 6, 14.

272. J ynne: confusion of y and n with *wen* and *n* of the original. Cf. Note 57.

273. 'That I follow what is natural to me.'

276. vor rihte cunde, 'from pure nature,' 'purely from nature.'

283. J metre poor, probably from omission.

284. C þif: misreading of þ for 3; cf. Note 57.

289. 'It is in the judgment of wise men.'

291 et seq. Cp. *Prov. of Alfred*, l. 412, O. E. Misc.

Ne gabbe þu ne schotte.

ne chid þu wyþ none sotte.

ne myd manyes cunnes tales.

ne chid þu wiþ nenne dwales.

293. J sum drops dat. -e: cf. Note 270.

296. J *cheste vare*, prob. 'a course of strife,' 'the faring of contention,' freely 'where contention is and where strife is rife' < O. E. *faru*, 'a course, a journey.' Cf. Note 215.

299. Though one might expect *sipe*, 'time' (cp. 293), C *side* J *syde* point to O. E. *sīde* 'side, hand': *an oþer side*, 'in respect to results of action taken contrary to the advice just given.'

307. *rede*: O. E. *folgian* takes dat. ; cp. C 389.

308. C *him* illustrates displacing of acc. form (J *hi*) by the dat. Cf. Note 125.

309. *of* governs *me*: *þinge*, acc. pl. — J *þet*: cf. Note 57.

310. J has uncontracted forms of verbs more frequently than C: e. g. 47, 340, 755, 756, *et al.*

311. Cf. Note 14. — Probably by influence of clash of accents in O. E. (cf. Note 110), in the Eng. verse of the 12th and 13th centuries it often happens that for rhyme dissyllabic compounds and dissyllabic words containing a derivative suffix (cf. Note 40), have secondary accent and verse stress on the second syllable as well as the first. One can be very sure of this usually only at the ends of verses where the final syllable must be accented and stressed for rhyme. The lines in *The Owl* where such accentuation and stress could have been, are 311, 315, 375, 691, 1270, 1760: but it would be better perhaps to read stress on the last and third or fourth from end syllables in these lines. Usually the accent is shifted from the root syllable to the last syllable, in such lines: cf. 691, C 1270, 1336, 1760. The shift of accent in words of more than two syllables occurs at 328, 351, 592, 683, ? 849, 1038, 1219, 1468, C 1488, 1600, 1677, 1766, 1754, 1758; 613, 626, 795, 854, 855, 901, 986, 1035, 1140, 1171, 1399, 1773-4. If a prep. be stressed, shift of accent is had in 492, 869, 889, 1141, 1182, 1212, 1299, 1375, 1400, 1598, 1753: otherwise clash of primary and secondary accents coincides with clash of verse stress. In 446, 1209, 1447, a prep. or an art., in 1213 an art., must bear stress or clash of accent is had in the last word. The same is true in 211, 1054, 1379, J 1488, 1704 (cp. 1400), if *and* is not stressed. Clash of accent in one word occurs at end of 907-8, C 1191 (prep. may be stressed); C 1423, C 1281, ? 514, ? 324; 1586, 973, 110, 1421 (cp. 715), C 1355, J 581-2.

323. J *efne* preserves *-n* of O. E. *æfen*: but cp. 332.

325. Cad, Ja, 'at': cf. *ed god*, *Ancor. Ricle* 368; *ed gode* *for*, *ib.* 414; etc.

332. J avoids *fort*: cf. Note 41.

340. J 'That one accounts of (people esteem) thee naught': C 'That one accounts thereof (with respect to that, esteems it) naught of worth.' *of þar* = *þar of*, not *of þare f.*: O. E. *song* is masc. — Cf. Note 310.

343. J *song* better for rhyme and grammar. In O. E. *hearpe*, *pipe* are fem. and *song* masc. Note 344 *hit*, and 346 *he* referring to *songe*: cf. Note 13.

347. *un-wille*. Sk. 'displeasure,' O. E. *unswilla*. He would prob. translate, 'beyond the point where displeasure begins'? — O. E. *onswille*, 'pleasant,' suggested by Egge (*Mod. Lang. Notes*, 1887, I. 12), as is shown by Toller's citations (*A. S. Dict.*), is doubtful. — Cp. 422, 1535, *unswille*, 'unpleasing' < O. E. adj. *unswille*. One may suggest an adverb 'over, too unpleasantly' (O. E. adv. *unswillum*, -*an*, *onswillan*, 'against one's will'): cp. *ouer-lange* 450, *ouer-swiþe* 1518.

351. -*hede* < **hēd*, unlauted by-form of *hād*: Kluge, *Grundriss*, I. 874.

353. J *maist*: cf. Note 78.

356. C *forþ* takes stress from first syllable of *eure*.

358. J *þa*: cf. Note 209, MSS. Var. 406.

359. MS. J gives stress on *þeyh*. — In C the first two syllables are unstressed, a phenomenon that occurs in between 45 and 50 verses: e. g. 409, 482, 505, 628, 637, 663, C 671, 747, 756, 825, 840.

364. J *eye* drops dat. pl. -*n*: cp. 381. — *an* for *am* in both MSS. points to a common original: cp. Note 805.

382. J drops infin. -*n*, as does 383 *iseo*.

384. Str. suggests *an* prep., *dare* sb., since J has a *dare*. Cp. Cornish *dar*, m. 'an oak' (Williams: *Dict. of Anc. Lang. of Cornwall*), not in Wright, *Dial. Dict.* — *N. E. Dict.* quotes the line under *dare*, 'I. To gaze fixedly or stupidly; to stare as one terrified, amazed or fascinated.' Cp. Mätz. s. v. *darien*, Brad. Str. *Dict.* s. v. *darin*; *Prompt. Parv.* p. 113, 'Daryn or drowpyn, or prively to be hydde.' On *an* for *an*, and J scribe's careless omissions, cf. Notes 1195, 239, 209.

390. J barme : ? first stroke of first *n* mistaken for *r*, in *banne* (O. E. *ban*, 'command,' *bannan*, 'to summon').

400. i-fare < O. E. *ferian*, wk. I.; strong pp. form by analogy with strong *faran*.

403. C is, 'his': cf. Note 515.

406. The orig. writing of C, *iswicst*, like J *swykst*, < O. E. *ge-swican*, 'cease, leave off,' makes poor sense.

408. 'Of a boar he will make a barrow pig,' 'Of a great matter he will make a little one.'

411. Pointing to a common original (cf. Note 805) is the odd coincidence that both rubricators wrote *b* for probable orig. ? *H*; this in C in spite of direction *h*. Cp. Notes 707, 955.

434. for mine *þinge*, 'on my account,' 'because of me.'

458. J *teone*: poor rhyme, result of ? failure to understand orig.

466. C better metre.

468. word: dat. -e omitted for rhyme.

471. C *hine* acc., J *him* dat., after *bi-þenche*. Cf. also Note 125.

484. hom: O. E. *helpan* takes dat. Cp. 887, 891, 1601, 1719.

501. Cf. Chaucer, *Nonne Preestes Tale*, 357-8:

'He fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was pryme.'

502. C *i-queþe*: cf. MS. Var. and Note 660.

504. *chokeringe*: cf. *writelinge*, 48. Professor Flügel calls attention to the fact that in *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* the owl defends her 'pleyn' song against that of the nightingale: *Al thogh I cannot breke* [v. l. *crackill*, *crake*] *it so in weyn*: see Vollmer's ed. 1898, p. 110. Cf. Wright, *Dial. Dict.* s. v. *chokkered*, 'obstructed, choked up.'

506. C *3at*: cf. Note 57.

513. J *Vo*: scribe careless; cf. Note 209.

515. The tendency to read pt. part. *is-tunge*, 'stung,' 'thrust,' parallel with *i-do* 513, is apparently indicated by later long *s* in C. — *is* may be *his* (cp. 403, 571, 1483), giving *tunge*, 'pudendum.' The unusual *is* for *his* in J would point to a common

original, and perhaps to *is tunge* or *istunge* pt. part. (O. E. *stingan*, 'sting,' hence 'thrust').

528. J tends to carry pl. *gop* < O. E. *gāþ*, into the sing., and has regularly *dop* for *deþ* (cf. Note 779).

529. 'at that time of need': *pare*, dat. f., O. E. *nēod*, f. or n.

530. *wike* < O. E. *wīc*, 'dwelling,' or < O. E. *twice*, 'office, duty, service' (cp. 603-4). J *beode* leads to derive *bode* from O. E. *bōdan*, 'to command, announce, threaten': cp. *mis-beode* 1541. But J normalizes *o* to *eo*, and the word may be from O. E. *bodian*, 'to foretell, bode.'

534. J Vo: scribe careless; cf. Note 209.

536. *mid hom*, 'with, in themselves.' — *myte*: cf. Note 962.

537. J *houhful* drops pl. *-e*, ? to mark elision: cf. Note 270.

540. The regular construction is *for to luti*.

541. J, poor metre and rhyme.

546. *to me, dome* (cp. 1672): linking of two words, stressing of logically unstressed *to*, and weakening of long *-e* in *me*, all to make fem. rhyme, is parallel with a practice of Chaucer; cf. Ten Brink, *Lang. and Metre of Chaucer*, § 328.

548. *for-worde* would be better for rhyme, and more correct grammatically: cf. Note 660.

550. Note the consistent use of *-e* in ind. pt. 2 s. of strong verbs: cp. 1058, 1308, 554, 103, 1049-52, 1632.

562. *rezel* < O. E. *hrægel*, prob. in sense of armor: 'Thy outer covering does not thoroughly protect thy body'; or, 'Thy outer covering is not extensive.'

563. 'what of good,' 'what good': part. gen.

571. *for is bare songe*, 'merely for his singing': cf. Note 515.

572. *noȝt* modifies *sape longe*: 'dear or estimable very long.'

575. Cf. Note 660.

581-2. J omits *al* and causes clash of stresses.

582. C *god-edede*: to omission and insertion of initial *h* in many MSS. Prof. Skeat calls attention (*Trans. Lond. Phil. Soc.* 1897). Cf. in *Owl* omission at C 1475, 403, 515, 571, 1483, 1090, 118: insertion at C 1177, 1356, 1498, 1662, 1761, 1785, 185, and general use of *hule*; J 1586, 1733; J 1225.

589. J *wenst*, poorer sense and rhyme than C *w[ʊ]nest*.

590. C *stede* < O. E. *stede* (cf. Sievers § 263), occurs at 966. Elsewhere (936, 1654, 1767) it is displaced, as here in J, by *stude* < O. E. *stȳde*.

592. C *ate* < *at þe* < *at þen* < O. E. *æt þæm* : cp. 1513.

599. 'that (if) thou lie not.'

601. C *mizte*, pt., makes smoother metre than J *myht*, pr.

606. *helpe to* : cp. 664; cf. Note 484.

607. J *nyme* drops infin. -*n*.

609. 'For it is precious to me, at Christ's house. . .'

611. 'Nor shall ever come thereto.'

613. J drops dat. -*e*, as *wunying* drops f. gen. -*e*, 614.

614. Both MSS. *wernen*. Wr. and St. print *yernen* (O. E. *geornian*, 'long for,' 'desire') which Sk. and Morris would prefer. *wernen*, 'to refuse, reject other dwellings (or, another dwelling) [than the great tree],' O. M. **wernan*, W. S. *wiernan*, *wyrnan* (cp. 1358), takes gen., and makes good sense.

615. *tron* : orig. str. neut., with wk. pl. nom. acc. -*n* (cf. 1133, 1201). — J omits *wel*, to detriment of metre : cf. Note 153.

620. Sk. and Str. read *sniup* : but C has *wen* dotted, parallel with J *snywe*, opt.

637. *is of olde iwrne* (*iwurne*) : 'has come down from of old (cp. 685 and Note).' Str. would emend to *ifurne*, 'a substantive formed from *ifurn*.'

638. *urne, eorne* : cp. 375. — Mätz. I. 40, mentions a parallel in *Roman de Renart* 4905, *Besoing si fet vielle troter*. Cp. also *Bessing fet uelle troter*, in a collection of O. Fr. proverbs of the early 12th century in Cod. Voss. Lat. 31 F, Univ. Lib. Leiden : Haupt, *Zeitschrift*, XI. 115.

642. C *mizst* : perhaps partly by analogy with *mōst*, from **mōtan*, 'may,' partly by use of -*st* of most verbs. Cf. Note 78. Rhyme points to *mizt* or *miht*, the usual form. J *mist* points to a common original with -*st* : cf. Note 805.

645. Strong pt. part. -*n* is usually lost, but is retained at C J 115, 130, 162, 935, 1725; C 514, 645, 1094.

648. C *þat*, 'that which,' may be *wat* with *wen* undotted : cf. Note 48.

649. J *þe* or *We*: *wen* rarely occurs in J; cp. 670, 1190, 1638.

650. 'And after those [as models] we make ours.' — J *makeþ* keeps -i- of pl. of -*jan* verbs.

655. *chaterestre*: -*ster*, -*sters*, fem. suffix in 13th and 14th century English; cf. Skeat, *Prin. of Etym.* § 238.

658. Probably a proverbial expression bidding to cease from vain labor.

660. 'Was well nigh out of counsel become,' i. e. was almost at her wit's end what to do or say to help herself. More grammatical *icworde* < O. E. *geworden* would make better rhyme. The MSS. tend to substitute *worþe* by analogy, without regard for rhyme: cp. 502, 548, 573, 575, J 1491.

666. *mid alle*, 'in every respect,' 'in the whole contention.'

667. The passage reminds of *Prov. of Alfred*, O. E. *Misc.*, l. 145: *Strong hit is to reowe ayein þe see þat flowep.*

668. *a3en* could take dat. or acc. J has dat. -*e* despite possible elision: cf. Note 6.

670. C *þan* (or *wan*, cp. 716, *wen* undotted, cf. Notes 57, 48, 2, 648), 'to whom,' dat. of rel. *þat*; or, less probably, adv. 'when.' — *winne*: coincidence of C undotted *wen* and *þ* or unusual *wen* in J.

671. C takes rhetorical stress more smoothly. — The man must by speech make appear what is other than the truth — must speak that it may appear that his spirit or courage is not disturbed.

672. *bi-hemmen* (O. E. *hem*, 'border': cf. Mätz., Brad. *Strat. Dict.*) preserves infin. -*n*, as does 678 *speken*.

679. Coincidence of smudges in C and error in J. — *upe þon* < O. E. *uppar þām* (cf. Toller *A. S. Dict.* s. v. *uppar*).

680. 'Here is [matter] for counsel [to him] who knows it': *red* is antecedent of *hine* and is dat. as in C 1464. One may read, 'Here is [means] to counsel who knows it (can recognize it as good counsel)': but masc. *hine* for *hit* makes objection to this. Again, one may read, 'Here is [means] to advise (to afford counsel to) [the man] who knows (is a master of) himself.'

682. 'As when counsel (a wise method of procedure) is in his thought': O. E. *wæn*, cp. 239. Str. notes on *wens*, '= doubt.'

684. *hit*, 'the matter.'

685. 'For of old (cp. 637) Alfred said a saw,' 'uttered a saying.'

687-8. *When þe bale is hest, þenne is þe bote nest: Prov. of Hendyng*, st. 23, Harl. MS. Cf. Note 176.

689. J MS. *yit yest*: cf. Note 57.

690. 'And because of its distress it is the greater.'

696. *in one uolde*, 'in [any] one fold [of the repository of good counsel, *red-purs*].' C omits doubling of the negative.

701. J hit for *hir*. *r* and *t* were probably often very like in the orig. of the MSS.: cf. Notes and MSS. Var. 680, 1106, 1221-2, 1260, 1341-2.

704. *hire* dat. form for acc. — or ? dat. with compound: cp. acc. 199, C 471, 828, 939. Cf. Notes 125, 308.

705. J *god*: -e probably elided: cf. Note 6.

706. J *alle*: f. acc. -e.

707. The coincidence of the rubricator's mistake of *N* for *H* in C, and of the omitting of the rubric letter in J, seems hardly chance. Cf. Notes 411, 955, 805. Note that the small capital of J 708 is omitted.

709. Professor Flügel suggests, 'originally *sumer tide* ?'

723-4. 'That a person may consider through (because of) the song, whither he must [go] and be there long.'

727. 'And take heed (learn) from the voice of the church (church singing).'

735. *hom*: cf. Notes 484, 125.

741. C *bidde*: same construction as *warni* 739. J *bidden*: opt. pr. pl., parallel with *beon* 740.

742. J *þat*: the form to which all forms of O. E. *sē, sēo, þæt*, were being levelled. — Ten Brink suggests (*Early Eng. Lit.*, vol. 1, 216, Bohn) that the passage 707-742 recalls Neckam's *De Naturis Rerum*, I, c. 51 (*De Philomena*): *Quid quod noctes tota ducit insomnes, dum delicioso garritui pervigil indulget? Nonne jam vitam claustralium prae oculis cordis constituis, noctes cum diebus in laudem divinam expendentium?*

748. The difficulty (*wes, bles*, both unusual) at the end of line in both MSS. points to difficulty in a common original: cf. Note 707. *an oper wes*, 'in different manner,' or (as Sk. suggests) 'another strain (Icel. *vísa*, "a stanza")': cp. Note 54. Not understanding the orig. the J scribe wrote *abyde* (orig. may have

been *abyde* or *ihere* or another word) and omitted the last word. The blank space was later filled with clipped *bles* (O. E. *blæst*): 'endure a different blast.'

755-6. J has fewer contracted verbs: cf. Note 310.

758. Wr. and St. print *wareuore*; cf. Notes 171, 48, 2.

762. 'No strength has power against rede (good judgment, a wise method of action).'

764. C *sholde miste*, J *solde myste*: Str. suggests O. Fr. *solde*, 'pay, wages' — hence *miste* pt. of O. E. *missan*, 'missed, has missed, lost.' — Perhaps *solde* is *sholde* (cf. Note 209), and *miste* = infin. *misse*, *t* for rhyme and by analogy: cf. *mist* pr. 3s. 825, Note 1640. Mätz. '*Miste*, fail, st. *misse*. — Das nur asso-nirende Wort scheint wegen *liste* in *miste* verwandelt. Vgl. *wes* statt *wis* l. 748.' Cp. also J *bles* for O. E. *blæst*, 748.

765. J *bureh*: cp. J *bureh* 766; cf. Note 190.

767. C *walle*. Regularly in *The Owl* st. m. acc. pl. coincides with nom. pl.; but the exceptions, C *walle* and C J *bridde* 123, show confusion of dat. and acc.

770-71. *ac wisdom* C 772, makes clear that the scribe, having begun 770 correctly, was led into completing the verse from 772, his eye having fallen on *wisdom* the second word of 772 as of 770. Supply J *pat* for *ac* in 772.

774. 'But because it knows (has) no wit.'

776. C 'draws in front of': J 'draws by the neck.'

779. Third sing. *dep* is practically lost in J; cf. Note 528.

782. J *h* for *hit*: cf. Note 209.

783-4. 'Man brings it about . . . that no other thing is his equal.' *Prompt. Parv.* '*Fyt* or *mete*, equus, congruus.'

785. J *yere*: *even* mistaken for *y*; cf. Note 57.

791. Pl. *-i-* of wk. *-jan* verbs is preserved at 455, 650, 791, 792, 850, 1355: *totorued* 1119 drops *-i-*.

793. 'Dost thou reckon concerning (esteem, O. E. *tellan*) me the worse because of that [namely] that I know (have in my power) but one kind of cunning?' — J *enne* < O. E. by-form *æne*.

800. Here and in 801 the orig. idea of *wip* opposition, and that of *mid* association, are preserved, though elsewhere frequently neglected.

801. *leip* has for subject *þe oþer* 799.

802. J oþe: cp. J 614.

803. of a mo swenge, concerning a greater blow' (cf. Toller *A. S. Dict.*, s.v. *mā*). *a mo mighz* be 'ever more' (O. E. *ā mā*), with *swenge* dat. pl.

805. þe for þu in both MSS. points to a common original; cp. Note 1640: cf. Notes 812, 364, 411, 642, 707, 902, 962, 955, 1184.

809 et seq. Cp. Æsop's fable of the Fox and the Cat.

810. 'The cat keeps life for himself quite well.'

812. for for *fox* in both MSS. points to a common original; cf. Notes 805, 364.

815-8. Probably refer to *kat*, as the return to *uox* in 819 suggests. The fox could hardly be said to 'hang by the boughs,' unless the line mean 'linger by (near) the boughs (trees) [and so be better concealed].'

818 C þan: dat. displaced in J by þe, now becoming the prevalent form. But cp. 826 and J þes C þe gen. in 822.

827. J al drops *ɹ* elided -e.

835. mi solue: early occurrence of *myself*. O. E. *seolf* survives (1) for emphasis, with pronoun in nom. 497, or when alone before a noun in 69, 495, 746, 1679, or with dat. of pers. pron. 810, 883, 1284; or (2) with reflexive force, with dat. of pron. 930, or with gen. 835.

836. Cp. 712.

840. J omits *al*, and causes clash of accents.

842. Probably from a tendency in the orig. (a marked one in C) to displace with -d the -p of verbs, the J scribe here turns the pt. parts. into pr. indic.

850. J drops -i- of *fundieþ*, pl. wk. 11; cp. 862.

855. J singinde: older, and from rhyme evidently the form of the orig. Cp. J *cumynde*, 1220, the only other pr. part. in the poem.

858. sunnen: survival of pl. dat. f. -en < -um; cp. m. *bischopen*, 1761.

869. C me, 'to me': perhaps error for *mi*.

874. MS. C ghe: scribe began *groni*.

879. J retains -n of opt. pl., as -n of prep. 863: but cp. both MSS. at 883.

881. 'It longs them (they long) [to go] hence, nevertheless. Those who are here, woe is to them because of that [i. e. that they are here; *pes*, causal gen.]. — C *hon*, explained by the fact that a dash over a vowel could be read *n* or *m*; or by the fact that final *m* tends to follow earlier weakening of inflectional *m* to *n*: cp. 135, 890, 1397, 1482, 1598, 1614.

883. *hom solue*: cf. Note 835.

887. *monne*: dat. pl. with *kaipe*: cp. 891. Cf. Note 484.

890. C *hin*: cf. Note 881.

901. 'Nor does any one think that because of thy piping any priest may sing in church.'

902. Curiously here begins a new set of spellings which extends to 962. From 962 to 1182 the first set is resumed. From 1182 to the end the second set is again employed with much regularity. — At line 902 first occur in C the diphthong *eo* and the contraction for *pat*, *per*. Here too first occurs in J contracted *pat*. As there is no change in the handwriting, each MS. being throughout in but one hand, the change probably occurred in the orig. of C. That orig. must then have been a copy, and not the author's MS. Cp. carefully Note 805 and references given therein: Note 1184.

904. Except for a very few scattered cases, *h* for *g* occurs here first in C.

906. *muchele more neode*, 'of much more need.' — J corrected *par* probably arose from the fact that the contraction (usually the same for *pat*, *par*, *per*) had occurred but once before in the orig. But cf. Notes 926, 970.

907. First occurrence of diphthong *ea* in C.

908. *Scotlonde*: acc. has dat. *-e* for rhyme.

910. Odd contraction for *and* occurs also at C 919.

911. First occurrence in C of *ð* (not used in J). Note 901 *wened*, 903 905 *oder*, where perhaps *ð* occurred in orig. and scribe read *d*.

912. J smoother metre.

913. *pare*: perhaps gen. pl. 'of them'; but cp. 996.

915. Dat. f. *pire* occurs seven times in C, thrice in J.

918. C *par*: *r* and *t* similar in form; or cf. Note 906.

923. J *souþ* & *norþ*: cf. Note 209.

926. J forlete, 'abandon': poor rhyme and sense. *r* mistaken for *z*: cf. Note 1106.

930. heom seolue: cf. Note 835.

931. J wepe drops opt. pl. *-n*.

932. C deoulene: wk. gen. pl. (*-ena*) with strong sb. J *deoude* preserves strong *-e* < O. E. *-a*. — C to beon: opt. pl. *beon*, J *beo*, would make better metre. — Here occurs first C *hw* for *zw*.

934. J, poor metre.

937-8. J drops dat. *-e*. — J *gon*, later ? Midland pl. for *gop*.

941. Str. substitutes *pat* for *pe*.

949. J *his*: note confusion of gender; cf. Note 13.

955. Coincidence of C *hule* for *Hule*, J *be vle* for *Vle*, points to a common orig.: cf. Notes 411, 707, 805, 812.

961. 'Dost thou ween that wise men leave the direct road for the foul fen? and that the sun does not shine the later (longer — that the sun is not still shining), though it (impers.) be foul in thy nest?' i. e. that there are not as desirable places and conditions, and they bright and fair, though thy nest (the place and condition to thee most desirable) be foul?

962. Here in C the first spelling begins again, to continue to 1182. — Contracted *pat* occurs not at all, and contracted *per* but once (1042), in J between 950 and 1184. — C *rizte*: cp. *mizte* 536, *zette* 1307.

964. J *neste* retains dat. *-e*.

965. one hole brede, 'a hollow board (board, for ? log, tree trunk).' *brede* < O. E. *bred*, is found A. D. 1200-1500 (*N. E. Dict.*, s. v. *brede*). Adj. *holh*, *holeuh*, *holu* (O. E. *holh*), and *hol* inflected *hole* (O. E. *hol*), 'hollow,' were common at this time (*N. E. Dict.*, s. v. *hollow*, *holl*). Cf. a parallel reference by the nightingale in *an hsl̥ stok* 1113 as dwelling-place or hiding-place of the owl. — Mätz. prefers here 'a broad hole,' and cites Lazamon II, 397 *brad*, *brad*, *bred* (O. E. *brād*, *latus*, *spatiosus*). — The former reading gives better sense. In the poem the single adj. following the substantive, at the end of the line or elsewhere, is very rare.

970. C *par* prob. = J *pat*: cf. Notes 126, 918, MS. Var.

967. Contractions for *pat* and *per*, *par*, are alike in the MSS. and prob. were so in the orig. To accept this explanation here, one

must suppose a last use of the contraction after the second spelling had been dropped at 962. Prob. here *par* is because of similarity of *r* and *t*: cf. Notes 926, 1106. — C *herst* would seem caused by mistaking *x* for *r* (cp. *for* for *fox* C J 812): 'That I draw (betake or associate) myself to the highest (best).' — Mätz. suggests a superlative *herrest*, if such could be. — One thinks of *hurst*, *hirst* < O. E. *hyrst* (cp. *e* < *i* in C *bi-chermet* 279, C *rechte* 1602, C J *sprenge* 1066, due prob. to proximity of liquid or nasal: Morsbach, *M. E. Gram.* § 114), 'a wooded eminence,' 'a grove,' 'a copse' (here a clump of trees by the house, cp. 585-96, *et al.*), used at this time (cf. *N. E. Dict.*, s. v. *hurst*). — Prob. a mistaking of *x* for *r* is the correct explanation.

978. Note use of *-n*. — *oferen*, 'frighten, terrify': cp. *Anc. Riv.* p. 230 *offeren*, 399 *oferd*; *Laz.* I. 224, II. 564, *offaered offered*; see *a-fere* 221.

981. C J *par*, where correl. *war* would be usual in *The Owl*.

982. J *grede*, *singe*: opt. pr.

983. J *noþe*: cf. Note 209. — J *lude*, has *-e*.

989. J drops infin. *-n*, but retains opt. pl. *-n* 990: cf. Note 1014.

991. of *twere twom*: *twere* gen. = *of twom*. J *of tweyre twom* indicates that the reading is correct. Mätz. suggests *to þan twam* or *of þinge twam* (cp. 1477). Possibly *twere twam* is to be explained as the result of analogy with O. E. m. f. *bā twā*, n. *bū tū*, dat. *bām twām* (cf. Sievers, 324, 2 n. 1.).

998. Wr. and St. print *War*.

1001. *houentinge* < O. E. *heof(o)ne getenge*, 'approaching, close to the skies.' J *houenetinge* and rhyme-word *geenge* support this. On confusion of *e* and *i* in neighborhood of a nasal, cf. Note 970, and *sprenge* 1066. Str. prints *heovene tenge*, which Mätz. prefers. If *tenge* be accepted, both MSS. prefer an irregular form that gives poor rhyme, — a fact that points to a common original with *tinge*. 'Rocks (crag: cp. *Garw. and Gr. Knight* 1434 and Mätz. II.) and hills (O. E. *clūd*) nigh to the heavens, snow and hail, [this physical condition] is usual (O. E. *geenge*) for them.'

1010. C *nute* < O. E. *nyton*, pr. pl. J *nuteþ* gives reg. pl. *-eþ* to an irreg. verb. Cp. Note 1133.

1011. C *noþ* : crook for *-er* omitted? *noþer* would give smoother metre than J *noht*.

1013. *bi-tiȝt*, 'covered': O. E. *tyhtan*, *tihȝan*, 'draw, stretch': cf. Toller *tyht* III., Mätz. *biȝten*, Brad. Strat. Dict. *bituhten*. Cp. Note 1446.

1014. J drops opt. pl. *-n*, as infin. *-n* in 1018.

1016. Börsch, *Ueber Metrik u. Poetik* (cf. Bibliog.), asks, 'Is Cardinal Guala meant, who was to divert King Alexander II of Scotland from his alliance with France, and to make peace with England, and who, when the King did not obey, pronounced excommunication and interdict in 1218?' It is not Scotland alone (cp. ll. 907-10) that is referred to here. Moreover, *wile* (1016) may be dat. sing. or dat. pl., 'once upon a time [on one occasion]', 'in former times.' *Sum* may be sing. or pl.

1019. J *be*: cf. Note 209.

1022. J omits *beþe* and spoils metre.

1025. C pr. *soli*, pt. *sunge*; J pt. *scholdich*, pr. *singe*: 'What shall (should) I [accomplish] there by means of my singing?'

1030. *ire* < O. E. *iren*, *isen*: Str. emends to *ise* for rhyme.

1031. MS. C long prob. = J *lond*: cp. 999. O. E. *gelang*, 'along, belonging to,' would make *este* & *god* comp. subject of *is*: cp. 1002.

1035. C *tiþinge*, cp. Icel. *tiðindi*: J *tydinge*, cp. O. E. *tiðan*, 'to happen.'

1037. Mätz. prefers *daze*, 'days,' to *lage*.

1038. J *þat* is poor.

1040. J omits *sum*: note metre.

1048. C *bi-clop*, 'clasped, embraced' (O. E. *bi-clyppan*, wk.): perhaps by confusion with *bi-cloped* (cf. 550) 'appealed, accused' < O. E. *bi-clespod*, *bi-cleopian*. J *i-clupt* < O. E. *ge-clyppod*, is regular.

1050. The episode of the punishment by the enraged husband may well be assigned to Neckam: 'Sed o dedecus! quid meruit nobilis volucrum praecentrix instar Hippolyti Thesidae equis diripi? Miles enim quidam nimis zelotes philomenam quatuor equis distrahi praecepit, eo quod secundum ipsius assertionem animum uxoris suae nimis demulcens, eam ad illiciti amoris compulisset illecebras.' *De*

Naturis Rerum, I, 51. Rolls Series edit. pp. 102-3. — See Introd. Date (10).

1052. MS. J *singe*: infin. with *woldest*.

1055. J *yat*: cf. 1091, Note 57.

1056. 'Bird-lime and snares, (and) quite everything, laid and set to catch thee.' *grinezw*: O. E. neut. n. a. pl. *grīnu* (cf. Sievers, 267).

1058. *hacche*, 'hatch, trap.' O. E. *hæc*, 'hatch, grating'; Swed. *häck*, 'coop, rack.' *Prompt. Parv.* p. 231, '*hec, hek, hetche*, or a dore *antica*.'

1064. 'Which of the two thou wilt, wife or maid.'

1074. Cf. Note 176.

1082, 1090. Note metre of J.

1089. J drops *-n* of O. E. *āgen*, and of pt. part. 1094, and ? elided *-e* 1096.

1091. King Henri could be only Henry II (1154-89), for he is spoken of as dead. The exclamation scarcely refers to the soul of Henry III (1216-72) after he shall die.

1106. C *dart* may be wk. pt. by analogy. Prob. *dart* = *darr*, *r* being much like *t* in the orig.: cp. Notes and MSS. Var. 680, 701, 926, 1220-21, 1260, 1341-2, 1353, 1360, 1471.

1113. J *mist*: cf. Note 78.

1114. J *twenge*: opt. for indic.

1115. *heme* contrasted with *hine*, 'servant': 'man,' 'head of a house.' Brad. Strat. Dict. ' ? from *hām* '; Mätz. ' cf. Gloss. of Shetland and Orkney words (Edmonston 1866), *hemma*, a wife, a house wife—Mann ? '; re-quoted in J. Wright, *Dial. Dict.* — *hine*: O. E. **hina*, 'a domestic'; cf. Toller, s. v. *hine*; Skeat *Etym. Dict.* s. v. *hind*.

1122. 'Then first thou mayest [be] of use (for a use, advantage).'

1125. Wr. and St. print C *spore*; Str. *szweore*, because of J. *Wen* and *p* are sometimes confused in the MSS.: cf. Notes 248, 1566.

1127. 'Neither is of any account, thy life nor thy blood.'

1133. J has reg. *-ep* for *-e*, *-en* < O. E. *sculon*: cp. Notes 1010, 1703.

1138. 'Thou art naught except [when] dead.'

1146. J omits *euer* and alters metre.

1148. J gen. sing. for gen. pl.

1164. C drops ?elided *-e*.

1166. *to-bunep*, 'beat with reeds or sticks': *Prompt. Parv.* 'Bunne, kyx, calamus.' 'Kyx or bunne or drye weed, calamus.' Cp. Shoreham's *Poems*, p. 85 (Percy Soc.): *so to-bete and so to-bored*.

1169-70. Note effect on metre of J omissions.

1174. The clergy. — C keeps *-i-* of pl. wk. conj. 1.

1176. J drops ?elided *-e*.

1177. 'Art thou ordained? or dost thou pronounce curses [being] (quite) unordained? For thou performest the office of priest, I know: I know not if thou were (C clearly, indeed, cf. Mätzner, *Wb.* 335, s. v. *geare*, adv.; O. E. *geare*, *gearwe*) a priest.'

1184. *oðer siðe*: cf. Notes 902 *et seq.* and 962. — At 1182 C the second spelling begins again. — The scribe of C met the contraction for *pat* again first here, and wrote out *pat*. Then he erased *at* and restored the contraction. — Note coincidence of J contracted *pat*, which here first appears again: cf. Note 962, and 805 and refs.

1186. 'Draw to thyself' — draw over on your own side of the road — consider yourself — how about you yourself? Evidently a familiar saying like 'Hang up thy axe,' 658.

1193. J drops opt. *-e*.

1195. C & *honge* = J *an honge*. *an* for *and* was apparently of occurrence in the orig. as in C; and, as Str. suggests, *an* arose from scribe's taking *an* for *and*: cf. Notes 239, 1371, 1718. — The correct reading of J is evidence that it was not copied from C: cf. Note 86. — J drops infin. *-n*, as at 1198.

1200. J *a-storue*: cp. O. E. *a-storfen*. Prob. error for *an storue*: cf. Notes 209, 1195.

1206. C *snuwes* or *smipes*, *i* and *wen* undotted (cf. Note 48): *sw* from *ow* from *aw* does not occur elsewhere in C; *nu* might be *mi*. Wr. and St. print *snurwes*: 'If snows shall (are to) lay hold (grip, bind up) evilly.' This fits the context and the writing of C better than, 'If smiths are to clench (rivet) badly.' Str. adopts *smipes*. Internal *th* does not occur elsewhere in J.

1215. O. E. *abidan* takes gen.: cp. 1695. But in *The Owl*,

except at 1695 and perhaps 1706, the acc. is preferred: cf. 1702, 1778.

1218. MS. C *worþ*: cf. Note 178.

1219-21. C *þat* may be *þer*: cf. Notes 906, 1262.

1220. J *is cumynde*: note 'progressive' present.

1221-2. Wr. and St. print C *izwarre*, *zarre*: cf. Note 1106 on *r* and *z*.

1225. Cf. MS. reading of C. Wr., St., and Str. insert *him* *er* before *he*: but cp. 1230 where the pron. is omitted. 'If thou seest [it; i. e. here ? *wrechede*] ere it be come, its force is well nigh taken from it' — because thou mayest avoid it or prepare for it.

1229. 'And (*dantes*) shall fly toward misfaring (missing their mark), if thou seest how [they] fly from the string [of the bow],' i. e. if thou seest how they are coming.

1231. Attention may be called here finally to the frequent omission of particles in J, and to the consequent roughening of the metre.

1233. The line in C is appositive to 1234 *sor*. — J *þauh* makes good sense: but perhaps the scribe's eye fell on *þauh* 1235.

1247. J 'where he knows nothing.'

1256. C *þurþ*: last *þ* very like *y*. Probably the orig. read: *Al itid þurȝ godes wille*, with *ȝ* or *y* or *wen* of *þurȝ* obscure. J *Al i wurp* supports this — as if the scribe began *itid*, and saw the troublesome next word and (as usual with him in such cases) omitted *tid* and substituted *wurp*. Cp. Notes 1405, 1428.

1257. C 'Why will men bemoan themselves (cp. J 1563) because of me?' J 'complain of me.'

1260. C *harem*, J *a tem*, point to common orig. (cf. Note 805). On *r* and *t* cf. Note 1106: on inserted vowel cf. Note 190.

1262. J *þer*: ambiguous orig. abbrev.; cf. Note 1219.

1270. C *worde*: superfluous *-e* in nom.

1271. *þe bet þe be, þe bet þe byse*, *Prov. of Hendyng*, st. 21, *Hari. MS.* Cf. Note 176.

1272. J *him*; cf. Note 125.

1285. 'Go as it may go,' 'whatever be the conditions.'

1287. 'All that thou sayest in order to abuse me.'

1292. 'and (very) well might [be].'

1297. 'She had her wits about her.'

1300. C he preserves gram. gender of *wisdom*: *hit* 1301 is impers.

1302. 'Therefrom (from witch-craft), wretch, thou must purify thee.'

1306. 'They were of yore (long ago) from priests' mouth accursed: such art thou still — thou didst never abandon witchcraft.' — C *zette*, J *yette* (cf. Note 962) point to a common orig.: cf. Note 805.

1309. 'I said (told) to thee now a little previously (a little before now) [that thou art accursed: cf. 1165-74], and thou didst ask [cf. 1177] if I were ordained as priest in mockery.' — J preserves dat. -e in *preoste*.

1315. C *chil*, J *chid*, point to difficulty as to *ld* in common orig. Cp. *chil* 1440, *golfinc* 1130, *sele* 943.

1318. The MSS. readings seem to give little sense. Str. suggests *pat* for *an* 1319, takes *pat* 1320 as? conj., and inserts *pin* before *i-wune*. He translates not very satisfactorily: 'The man must be well star-wise who know (*sic*) enough of the coming of such things as thou sayest that is thy custom.' — But *wite* is rather infin. like *beo*. In view of J *i-noh*, one would be inclined to accept *inoh* for *innop* (cp. *innoh* 1220 and *purp* for *purh* 1256, 1405, 1428), though J is not to be relied on when the scribe met a word he did not understand — especially such a word in an obscure passage. Accepting *inoh*, one would read, 'And know very well from what (pron.) things come (opt. indir. quest. — i. e. know the sources or causes of things): thus thou sayest that (pron.) is customary (a usual thing, O. E. *gewuna* sb., *gewunelic* adj., *gewunian* vb.) [with thee].' — *innop* might < O. E. *innop*, masc. 'the bowels, heart, womb': 'And know the hidden sources from which things come.' — A difficulty in all the above is the lack of *ping* with -e in the nom. sing. or pl. in the poem elsewhere: the form is always *ping*. As dat. *pinge* occurs several times, one may read: 'And know quite well from what (*wucche* adj. cp. 936, 1504) things come (opt. indir. quest.), as thou sayest, what (that which) is usual (in the regular course of nature)' or 'And know the hidden source from which thing (source) comes, as thou sayest, what is in the course of nature.'

1322. Str. states that *bi-haitest* 'is not to be explained. The

conjectured *bizwaitest*, though not found elsewhere, may mean "regardest, beholdest." Cp. 'he wayted many a constellacioun,' Chaucer *Squire's Tale*, 121. — One might suggest that *bihaitest* is by analogy with pt. *be-heht* (*A Moral Ode*, O. E. Misc., l. 238, *biheyhte*), O. E. *be-hūtan* (cf. Mätz. *Wb.* p. 242, for forms *bi-haten*, *bihoten*, *biheten*), 'to promise, vow, threaten'; and read, 'makest vows to,' or 'threatenest [with thy cries].' — As *d* and *t* interchange in 2nd and 3rd persons, and *ai* is but a graphic variant of *-ē* in *The Owl*, one may find here a parallel in meaning to the meaning of *bihedde*, pt. 'guarded, watched' in 102: i. e. pr. *bihedest* 'watchest, regardest, beholdest'; cf. Mätz. *Wb.* p. 243, s. v. *biheden*, *Lazamon*.

1340. J *spusinge*, better rhyme and grammar.

1341-2. MS. C *hite*, *awet*: cf. Note 1106.

1346. 'The one who ought to be.'

1348. J *i-lere* connected with O. E. *læran*, 'teach'; prob. not so good as C *i-bere* 'behavior, acts': 'to that end is all my activity.'

1353. *stunde* is gram. f., hence masc. acc. *sumne* is not so good: C 'during some time'; J 'at, during some time,' dat. or acc.

1355. J 'because of ill-advice, ill methods of activity.' Masc. C *un-rede* could originally not have acc. *-e*.

1358. CJ doubled *ne* points to common orig. — *songes*, acc. pl., or gen. s. or pl. with *zwerne*: cp. Note 614.

1361. 'And they may act by my songs.'

1371. C & = *an*, 'in': prob. caused by use of *an* for *and*, along with use of prep. *an*, in the orig. Cf. Notes 239, 1195, 1718.

1372. *hi* = *wepne*.

1374. *heo*, *hine*, refer to masc. *songe*: cf. Note 19.

1380. O. E. *panne*, *ponne*, would make better rhyme than *penne* < by-form *pænne*, or than *peonne* by analogical substitution of *eo* for *o*.

1382-3. 'Wroth be the holy Cross with them who . . .'

1386. J *neste*: dat. *-e* helps to smoother metre.

1388-90. Str. displaces *lustes* in both lines with *lust*. *lustes* 1390 gives quite good sense. Prob. the common orig. had *lustes* 1388, a misreading because of the similarity of 1390 (cp. Notes 411, 707, 955, 805). This would indicate that the orig. of C and J was a

copy (cf. Notes 1711, 805, 812, 902). — *lustes* 1388 may well be predicative: '[It] is difficult to destroy lusts of the flesh.' If this be taken, *he* 1389 is pl., and *abide* opt. pl. 1390 *hi* acc. f.

1400. Wr. and St. print *wronchede*, ? cp. O. E. *wræne*, 'lascivious, wanton': *wronc* (c very like e, cp. 50, 367), cp. O. E. *ranc*, 'proud, arrogant, showy.' — J *wlonkhede*: cp. O. E. *wlonc*, 'proud, insolent, lively.'

1401. J acc. *nyþ*, better.

1402. *honde* = ? *shonde* (O. E. *scand*, *scond*; cp. *schonde* 1498, 1733): 'With pleasure arising from [a] man's shame.' After preceding *s*, initial *s* before *ch* is lost in C at 1616, 1676, 1713: cf. Notes. As the MSS. agree on *honde*, perhaps the reading is correct and an obscene practice may be referred to.

1403. As usually at a difficulty, J changes the word.

1405. C þurþ, J þur = *purh*: cf. Notes 1256, 1428. A difficulty in the common orig. ?

1415. 'Such a one may abuse for lasciviousness who (*he* . . . *þar*) sins worse in passion (? pride).' Not understanding *tellen* < O. E. *tælan*, *tēlan*, J scribe wrote, 'Such she might be in respect to lasciviousness, who . . .'

1417. C Bet: 'Better [should I do] if I should bring wife or maid to love [than if I should abuse her], when I sing.' J *Hwet*, prob. better.

1428. C þurþ: cf. Note 1405.

1434. *hit* refers to *zunling*.

1438. J 'And he leaps (tumbles) about on either side': cp. 379 *stard*; 1477 *oper*; *sid* drops dat. -e. Cf. Skeat *Erym. Dict.*, s. v. *start*.

1440. 'What may that child (cp. Note 1315) [do]?' How can it help it?

1445. Prob. orig. undotted *reowe* (O. E. *hræow*, 'sadness, sorrow'), or dotted *reope*, 'ruth, pity' (Icel. *hrygð*, allied to O. E. *hrēcwan*).

1446. *tohte* *ilete*, 'countenance drawn [with grief or excitement from passion].' Cp. Lazamon, *tohte*, pt. of *tuhtan* < O. E. *tyhtan*.

1447. J *wunglinge*: due to confusion of *wen*, *þ*, *y*; cf. Note 57.

1454. J corrected *heorte bre[p]*, would make good sense perhaps as gen. + nom. The heart soon loses breath and abandons the race of love.

1457. MS. C *mines*: ? by influence of *-es* of *songes*.

1459. MS J *sike*, 'sigh,' is poor.

1464. J dat. *-e* is better for gram. and metre.

1469. MS. C *3if*: cf. Note 57.

1471. MS. C *sortes*: cf. Note 1106.

1474. C 'How any man ever behaved so (O. E. *faran*) that he could drive his heart (mind) to do it to another man's wife: for it is either of two things . . .' J 'How any man haveth such a course (O. E. *for*, *foru*, f.) as (rel. *pat*) could drive his heart . . .': or ' . . . haveth such a course that [he: cp. C *e*] might drive his heart . . .'

1476. C *an o*: as in 1489, due to scribe's mistaking *t* or capital *t* for the sign for œ , and retaining *o* of *to*. Cf. Note 1195.

1477. 'For it is either of two things (cp. *oper* J 1438).'

1482. MS. C *wisdon*: cf. Note 881.

1483. C *is*: cp. *e* 1475 and cf. Note 515. — Brad. Strat. Dict. quotes this line under 'hear' < O. E. *hȳran*, perhaps with the idea, 'Hearken willingly to counsel (*hure*) to do him shame of (in respect to) his wife.' *hure* probably < O. E. *hȳrian*, 'to hire, obtain, procure': cp. *bugge* and context 1506, which is evidently a returning to the thought in this line.

1487. J *adredeþ*: indic., poor rhyme.

1489. C *an o*: cf. Note 1476.

1491. J *wurþe*: cf. Note 660.

1494. A poor line in C.

1498. J 'The one (or That one) is at the shame of the other,' is prob. a result of the J scribe trying to correct what he could not understand. — *pat on*, cf. 1500-02; *pat oper*, cf. 1503-10: both refer to 1477.

1509. *he lai*, prob. 'she'; cp. 1494, 1505: cf. Notes 19, 107.

1512-13. C *þat te* < *þat þe*: *atte* (cp. 592) < O. E. *æt þām*, orig. only masc. and neut. before initial consonant: the fem. was *atter* (*frume* orig. fem.) < O. E. *æt þære*.

1520. C *mode*: *-e* for ? length of vowel.

1523-6. *þat leof is*, 'to whom it is dear (a dear thing).' — C 1525 *þare*, 'that one,' refers to *þare þat* 1526. — J *þare* 1525, 1526, refers to *wymmon*. — *gulte*, pr. indic. 3 sing., result of syncope and assimilation; -e for rhyme. J 1526 'pursues the one who has naught.'

1527. *at-tom* for *at hom*, 'at home.'

1528. *huse*: acc. -e for rhyme or vowel length. — Wr. prints [*oþer*] *lere*.

1532. *i-schire*: poor rhyme.

1538. C better metre.

1539. C *þ is*: crook of contraction for *þer*, omitted.

1566. J *wine*, *wiue*: cp. Notes 57, 248, 1125.

1569. Str. reads *þat* as conj., and supplies *he*. *þat* is a rel. pron. with antecedent *ore*.

1572. for *þine felle*, 'to save thy skin.'

1576. MS. C *hlad*: cf. Note 178.

1578. *deþ* after *þan*, 'behaves accordingly.' O. E. *wif*, neut.

1588. Adv. *sore* 1587 would at first lead to accept *sore* as adv. Then *ongred* (J *ongreb*) as 3 sing. impers. (cf. Mätz. *Wb.*) would give: 'And it grieves her (she is grieved) sorely at heart.' — Pt. part. *ongred* rhymes better with *oflonged*, and *sore* may be dat. inst. of substantive: 'And because of her pain, grieved at heart.'

1592. C. *þunþ* = J *þinkþ*: cf. the variants of 3 sing. in 1472, 1473, 1649, 1651, 1694.

1597. for *hire þinge*, 'on her account.'

1598. C *sun*: cf. Note 881. — MS. *murnige*: dash over *i* for *n*, omitted.

1601. *hire*: cf. Note 484.

1602. *hoþeþ*, *howeþ*: evidently same division of words in common orig. J, *wen* and *þ* confused: cf. Note 57.

1603. C *ah*: better sense than J *ē*.

1607. C *ylað*: supported by reference at 1641-2.

1614. C *fron*: cf. Note 881.

1616. C *schadde* < O. E. *scēadan*: cf. Note 1402.

1618. *inmeaþe*, *unmeaþe* (cp. 352), compare < O. M. *unmēþ*, W. S. -*mēþ*: 'lack of moderation,' 'error, blame, transgression.' 'Wherefore (Therefore) is indeed blame for thee,' i. e.

'because, though thou liest dead . . . thou canst not equal

1620-1. 'Thy death is naught (of no advantage) to any thing: I know not at all for what thou mayest [be of avail, profit].'

1624. *þe*: perhaps instrumental of *þæt*: 'thereby.' — Cp. O. E. *þā gīt, þā gēt*.

1627. *tolli*: cp. *Anc. Riw.* 290, 5 *tolleð*, 'draws'; *Piers Plowman* B v. 214 *tolled*, 'drew'; cf. *Seinte Marherete*, E. E. T. S. Pub. p. 10 for a list of uses of *tollen* in this sense.

1631-2. 'But thou never, in life nor in death (adv. gen.) didst stand man stead (cf. *Toller*, *A. S. Dict.* s. v. *stæl* III.) for good (*to gode*, cp. *to hwan* 1621, 1633).'

1633. 'I know not for what [end] thou producest (? O. E. *bregdan*, *brēdan*, "to weave, draw, draw forth") thy brood.' J *word*, 'drawest forth thy speech,' or 'cunningly entanglest thy speech,' as the verb will permit. Difficulty lies in *breist*, from *bregdan*. Str. emends to *bredst*, and later (*Eng. Stud.* i. 212-14) alters this to *brest*, without comment in either case. J *breist þi word*, '? brayest, resoundest harshly, thy speech': O. Fr. *braire*.

1640. Str. and Sk. prefer C *þu* (cp. 805 *þe seist*), which makes *lore* (f. acc.) correct in form. — *mist*, 'fails,' 3 sing. (cp. 825) and *lore* nom. (-e for rhyme and vowel length) would preserve *þe*, dat. J scribe omitted *þu*. — Wr. and St. print *nust*.

1641-2. Cp. 1607-15.

1642. MS. C *worþ*: cf. Note 178.

1649. *þat game*, neut.: cp. 1666.

1651. 'Methinks that thou playest into my hands.'

1665. 'one cryeth in shame upon (to) the man.'

1668. 'summoned [thy] army.'

1672. *to me*: cf. Note 546.

1675. Indekl. rel. *þe* is displaced in J by *þat*, now becoming the general relative: cp. 1346, 1386, and 1352, 1383, 1447, 1671.

1676. C *scharpe*: cf. Note 1402.

1680. Note C *mid*, J *wyp*: cf. Note 800.

1681. C *bo þe*, J *beo þ*, point to common orig.: cf. Note 805.

1683. Str. retains C *schille*, prob. as adv. 'shrilly,' 'vehemently' (cp. adj. 1721), with *grede*, pr. with fut. sense (cp. 1698). Perhaps *schille* is a slip for *schulle*.

1690-1. J comen, holden, retain pt. pl. -n.

1692. Str. displaces *par* by *pat*. — Impers. *mē* inserted as subject would make poor metre.

1695. domes: gen. s. or acc. pl. with *abide*; cf. Notes 1215, 1706.

1703. J schulleþ: cf. Note 1133.

1706. on-sene: ? gen. (O. E. f. -e) with *abide*; cf. Note 1695.

1708. 'For though she would not so eagerly have gone after her forces . . .'

1711. New paragraph in both MSS. contrary to sense, points to a common original, which from the error must have been a copy: cf. Notes 805, 812, 902, 1388-90.

1713. C schelde: cf. Note 1402.

1715. 'Through bold words and with [fierce] appearance, behavior.'

1718. J &, or *in* contracted: if &, prob. for *an*, prep. Cf. Notes 1195, 1371.

1725-6. Str. and Sk. emend to *monne*, *bonne*.

1728. 'Though she should [speak] before the king': J dat. -e.

1731. Str. and Sk. emend to *þan kinge*, dat., for sense and metre. One may suppose omission of an antecedent of *he* 1732, *his* 1734. — Perhaps the poet carried over in mind *king* 1728 to 1732, and used *þanne* as adv. 'then': *heo* and *he* are interchangeable, cf. Note 19.

1733. *inc* < O. E. *inc*, dat. of *git*, 'you two,' would have been better than *hunke* < O. E. *unc*, 'us two.' J 1734 has *we* for *ȝe*: cf. Note 57. Cp. J *eu* for *us* 1747.

1739. 'I grant it indeed (willingly).'

1741. Only occurrence in *The Owl* of dat. f. *mire*.

1750. J 'her linden.' C *ore linde*, dat. f.

1751. J scribe did not understand unusual *nuzte* < O. E. *nyton*, or there was in the orig. a form difficult for both scribes.

1752. Portesham parish is near Weymouth. In former times the advowson and manor were held by the monastery of Abbotsbury. Sk. notes that the town Portesham, south-east of Dorchester, is now about three miles inland.

1764. 'Why will they not take to themselves a wise course

of procedure that he should be with them . . .'; or 'Why will they not take to themselves [what will be] as wise counsel, so that he . . .'

1777. 'So they condemn their intelligence [as] in error (foolish).'

1779. 'But let us, however, fare to him.'

1783. *J dome*, 'judgment, verdict:' poor sense and rhyme.

1785. *ende*: dat. or acc.; cp. 1132 (O. E. *ende*, 'end,' 'district'). 'for all, from beginning to end'; or, 'for all the matter, from the beginning.'

1791. *þer heo bi-come*, 'where they arrived,' or 'where they should arrive.'

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Glossary

This glossary is cut down from a complete glossary and grammatical and etymological index to all occurrences of all forms in both MSS. On the limiting of citations and of etymological matter, see Preface. As this series of texts is intended for reading as literature, *all* the forms of only MS. Cott. are given. The forms of MS. Jes. Coll. are given only where the sense differs from that of MS. Cott. A form quoted is to be repeated until another is given. Frequently forms at one time divided in a MS. and so printed in the text with hyphens, and at another time not divided, are quoted only as they appear first. The order of the words is strictly alphabetical; but *þ* follows *T*, and *ȝ* precedes *Ț*. Medially *þ* follows *tg*, and *ȝ* is with *g* after *h*. *Wen* of MS. Cott. is printed *w*. The poem is taken as too early for lengthening of vowels in open syllables, and *i* before *ng* is counted short. Abbreviations are as in common use. When the designations of mood and tense are omitted, supply "indic. pres." if no other designation has just preceded; when of mood only, supply "indic." if no other designation has just preceded.

a, art. *a*: see **an**, and Note 37.

ā, **a**, prep. *in*, 20, 115 etc.:
on, 134: *at*, 323: *at*, *by*,
89, 219 etc.: see **an**, and
Note 37.

abak, adv. *back*, *back-*
wards, 824, 877.

abide, inf. (see Note 1215),

bear, *endure*, 1215 etc.;
abīd, 3s. 1778: *remain*,
abīde, opt. pl. 1389 (see
Note): *abide*, *stay*, **abīd**,
3s. 466; inf. J 1437 :
await, **abīdeþ**, pl. 1702 :
waited, **abōd**, **abōt**, pt. s.
41, 1175: *stop*, **abīd**,
imp. s. 747, 837, 845.

abisemar, **abisemere**, see
Notes 148, 1309.

- abī-spel, see bī-spel.
 abiten, inf. *bite to death*, 77.
 abōd, see abīde.
 abozte, pt. pl. *atoned for*, 1060.
 abrad, pt. s. *broadened, dilated*, 1044.
 abrōde, *on brood*, 518 (O. E. *on + brōd*).
 abūte, adv. *about, around*, 16, 645.
 ac, ah, conj. *but*, 83, 1183 etc.
 a-cōled, pp. *grown cold*, 205.
 a-cōrde, sb. *accord*, d. 181.
 a-cursī, inf. *curse*, 1704.
 a-cwālde, pp. *killed*, 1370.
 ad, see Note 325.
 a-dai, see dai.
 adel, adj. *addled*, 133.
 a-diȝte, 1s. *order, arrange*, 326.
 a-drēde, inf. *dread, fear*, 1266, 1484; opt. s. 1487.
 a-dūn, adūne, adv. *down, below*, 208, 920, 1454.
 a-dūnest, 2s. *dinnest*, 337.
 adwole, see Note 1777.
 a-fēre, inf. *terrify*, 221.
 a-fērd, *afraid*, pp. 410, 472. See ofēren.
 a-fōled, pp. *fooled*, 206.
 a-fōnge, inf. *receive*, 1196.
 after, prep. *after*, 140 etc.: *in search of*, 1709: *according to*, see Note 650: after þān, *accordingly*, see Note 1578.
 a-ȝaf, pt. s. *uttered*, 139.
 aȝein, adv. *opposite*, 1788: *again, back*, aȝēn, 454, 818, J aȝeyn 1700.
 aȝēn, prep. *against, opposed to*, 676-78 etc.: *in expectation of, in anticipation of*, 436, 1153: aȝēn bet, *against that, at or near the time when*, 499.
 a-ȝeines, prep. *against, contrary to*, 1371.
 a-ȝēre, see ȝēr.
 aginne, inf. *begin, proceed*, 1289.
 a-gōn, inf. *pass away*, 355 etc.; a-gō, pp. 507, 508; a-gēb, 3s. 1453.
 agrülle, inf. *disturb, harass*, 1110.
 aȝte, see aht.
 āh, 3s. *ought*, 1471.
 ah, see ac.
 āhene, adj. *own*, 1286, 1542.
 aht, adj. *valiant, worthy*, 1479, 1481, 1500; aȝte, pl. 385, 389.

- ahwēneþ, pl. *trouble*, 1564; al-swā, adv. *also*, 1663,
 18. a-wēne, 1258. al-swō 891; aīswā, *just*
 aīshest, aīsheist, see as-
 kedest. so, 1329, 1373.
 aīþer, pron. *either of two*,
 n. 7. aluue, prep. and sb. *to, into*
love, 1417.
 aiware, adv. *everywhere*,
 216 (O. E. *æg-hwær*). amanset, pp. *accursed*,
 akursedest, pt. *didst curse*, 1307.
 1184. amidde, adv. *by, at the*
middle, 124, 643.
 al, adj. *all*: oblique cases, amis, adv. *amiss*, 1365,
 alle; exc. gpl. alre 852. 1434, 1540.
 — Pron. al, pl. alle, exc. amōng, prep. *among, amid*,
 al 78, 1174. — Adv. gpl. 506 etc.: *hēr-amōng*,
 alere, alre in comps. with *in this*, 744; *bar-amōng*,
 superlatives, *of all, very*, *among, of them*, 497: —
 684, 687 etc.: adv. al, *adv. at intervals*, 6,
 usually with sō, *quite*, J 81.
just, see alsō; *quite* 215, amorþe, see morþe.
 488. an, prep. (see Note 37), *in*,
 alamed, pp. *lamed, crushed*, 54 (see Note) etc.: *among*,
 1604. 905 etc.: *at*, 323: *into*,
 ālde, see ōld. 467, 1651: *upon*, 1246.
 alegge, inf. *confute*, 394. an, art. (see Note 37), *a*,
 al-miþti, adj. *Almighty*, *an*, 4 etc.; *ane dm.* 1021:
 1173. — num. am. ānne, 794
 alōþ, prep. and adj. *in hate- etc.: — pron. am. ānne*,
ful, base, 115. 802, *eine* (O. E. *ænne*),
 alōþeþ, 3s. *becomes hateful*, 759.
 1277. an, conj. *and*: see Note
 alsō, adv. *just as if*, 146; 1195.
just so, 237; *just as*, an, 18. *grant, allow*, 1739.
 1012; *also, in like man- andsware*, sb. *answer*, a.
ner, 443, 508: see al. 639, 657, *andsware* 149,
 and-swere 665, and-

- suere 705, ansuare 487,
 551, ansvere 470, an-
 sware 55, n. 399; an-
 swere, a. 1710.
 an-hōnge, pp. *hanged*: see
 Note 1195.
 an-hōð, pl. *suspend*, 1646,
 J 1612.
 a-niȝt, see niȝt.
 anōn, an-ōn, adv. *anon*,
 488, 522, 1554.
 ansuare, ansuere, an-
 sware, see andsware.
 ansuare, imp. s. *answer*,
 555.
 ape, sb. *ape*, n. 1325.
 appel, sb. *apple*, n. 135.
 ār, conj. with opt. *ere*,
 552, 692, etc.; ēar 1216;
 hēr, J 1225: — adv.
before, previously, ēar
 1560, 1637; ēr 866,
 1144, 1432.
 a-redde, opt. s. *may free*,
 1569.
 areȝ, adj. *cowardly*, 407:
 areu, *base*, 1498. Cf.
 Note 190.
 areȝpe, arehȝe, sb. *cow-*
ardice, fear, d. 404,
 1716. Cf. Note 190.
 areme, see arme: Note
 190.
 ariȝt, ariht, adv. *aright*,
 400, 904 etc.: ariȝte,
 prep. with adj. *at in the*
proper, 323, arihte 1428.
 arise, inf. *rise*, 327; ariȝt,
 3s. 1394, 1397; ariseȝ,
 pl. 731.
 arme, areme, adj. pl. *poor*,
miserable, 537, 1162.
 art, artu, 2s. *art, art thou*,
 38, 61, 541 etc.
 a-scheweȝe, 1s. *frighten*
away, 1613: see shueles.
 askedest, pt. 2s. *didst*
ask, 1310; aishest, aishē-
 ist, 2s. 473, 995.
 asnōwe, see snōu.
 aspile, inf. *spoil, ruin*, 348.
 a-storue, pp. *starved to*
death, slain, J 1200: see
 Note.
 aswinde, inf. *vanish*, 1574:
enervated, pp. adj. as-
 wūnde 1480, a-svnde
 534.
 at, prep. *at*, 86, 293 etc.;
in, at, 607, 608, 615;
of, 181; *to*, 1211: at ōne,
at one, together, 785: ate,
atte, at the, 592 (see
 Note), 1513.
 at-broide, pp. *stolen unlaw-*
fully, 1380.
 ateliche, adj. *hideous*,
 1125.

- at-flīþ, 3s. *flees away*. 37.
 aþele, sb. *high-born*, npl. 632.
 at-hōlde, inf. *hold, consider*, 695, 1420; at-hōld, pt. s. 392.
 at-prenche, inf. 248, 814: see Note 248.
 at-rūte, inf. *flee, escape*, 1168: cp. M. H. G. *riuten, ruten*, 'root, root out'; cf. Brad. Strat. *Dict.*, Mätzner *Wb.*
 at-schēt, pt. s. *shot away*, 44; at-schote, pp. 1623.
 at-stōnde, inf. *withstand*, 750.
 atte, see at.
 atter-coppe, sb. *spiders*, dpl. 600.
 at-tōm, *at home*, 1527.
 at-wēnde, inf. *escape, turn away*, 1427.
 at-wīte, inf. *twit, censure for*, 1234; 2s. at-uītest 597, at-uītestu 751, at-wīst 1332, attwītestu 1187; at-wīten pp. 935.
 aualle, inf. *fall, fall down*, 1685.
 auele, see fele.
 auīnde, inf. *learn, experience*, 527, 856.
 auorþ, adv. *forth, forward*, 824.
 a-uōþ, pl. *receive*, 843.
 a-wai, a-wei, adv. *away*, 250, 33 etc.: *awai-ward, away*, 376.
 a-wēdeþ, pl. *rage, become mad*, 509.
 a-wēne, prep. with d. *in thought*, 239, awēne 682.
 a-wēne, see ahwēneþ.
 awēr, adv. *anywhere*, 1342.
 awille, see wille.
 a-wreke, opt. pl. *avenge*, 1562; pp. 262, 1105.
 a-wrōþeþ, 3s. *becomes wroth*, 1278.
 ax, sb. *axe*, a. 658.
 axest, axestu, 2s. *askest (thou)*, 707, 711.
 ayeyn, adv., prep., J, see ajein, ajeñ.
 bādelīche, adv. *boldly*, 1707.
 bale, sb. *affliction*, n. 687, 699.
 banne, sb. *troop called to war*, d. 390.
 bare, adj. *bare, mere*, 547, 571: as sb. *the open*, 56, 150.

- bare**, sb. *barrow pig*: see Notes 408, 190.
barme, sb. *bosom, midst*, J 390: see Note.
bataile, sb. *battle*, a. 1197.
bē, see **bēon**.
bēche, sb. see Note 14.
bedde, sb. *bed, couch*, d. 967, 1047, 1492 etc.
bedde, 1500, J 968, see **ibedde**.
bēde, pt. 2s. *askedst*, 550; opt. pt. s. 1678.
bed-time, sb. *bed-time*, n. 324.
beire, num. *of both*, g. 1584.
bēlde, see **bōld**.
bēnde, sb. *bonds*, apl. 1428.
bēod, 3s. *bids, commands*, 1437.
bēon, inf. *be*, 932 etc.; opt. pl. 1221; **bēo**, inf. 1194 etc.; opt. s. 1225, 1233, 1242, 1267 etc.; opt. pl. 1582; imp. s. 1638; **bē**, inf. 1151, 1768; **bōn**, inf. 262 etc.; opt. pl. 452, 740, 883; am, 1s. 170 etc.; art, artu, 2s. 38, 541 etc.; is, 3s. 34 etc.; **bēoþ**, **bēoð**, pl. 911, 1338 etc.; imp. pl. 1735; **bōþ**, pl. 75 etc.
bēre, sb. *behavior*, d. 925
bere, inf. *bear, carry*, J 1022; 1s. 1599, 1701; **bered**, pl. 1372; **berþ**, 3s. 775, *shows* 403.
bērne, sb. *barn*, d. 607.
bērne, inf. *burn up*, 1203.
berste, opt. pl. *may burst*, 990.
be-sēo, opt. s. *have a care for*, 1272.
bēst, sb. *animal*, 99.
best, adv. *best*, 470.
bet, adv. *better, rather*, 21, 23, 39 etc.
bēte, inf. *make amends*, 865.
betere, adj. comp. *better*, 712, 713, 808 etc.
bī, prep. *by, near, along*, 278, 304 etc.; *by*, 366, 1431-2 etc.; *by, at*, 241, 365, 372 etc.; *at*, 109; *through, because of*, 723, 1463-5; *concerning*, 46, 793, 835; *with respect to*, 92, 93, 129, 245, 428, 1243, 1361-73: see Note 815-8.
bi-chermet, pl. *scream at*, 279.
bi-clop, pp. *clasped, embraced*: see Note 1048.
bi-cloped, pp. *made accusation, uttered thy plaint*,

- 550: see O. E. *be-cleopod*, Bosw.
- bi-cumeþ, 3s. *is fitting*, 271: — *happened*, bi-cōm, pt. s. 105: — *arrived*, bi-cōme, pt. pl. 1791 (see Note): *come*, bi-cume, pp. 137.
- bidde, inf. *pray for, beseech*, 858; 1s. 1568; biddeþ, pl. 886; bid, 3s. 441, 1437, bit 445, 1352: — *bid*, bidde, 1s. 741 (see Note), 929, 1221, 1253.
- bi-ȝete, inf. *obtain, attain*, 1629; opt. s. 726.
- biginne, 1s. *begin*, 1456; bi-gon, pt. s. 13.
- bi-grēde, inf. *cry out at*, 1413; opt. pl. 304; bi-grēdeþ, pl. 279, bi-grēdet 67; bi-gradde, pt. pl. 1144.
- bi-grōwe, pp. *grown over*, 27, 617.
- bi-haitest, see Note 1322.
- bi-hālde, see bihōlde.
- bi-hēde, inf. *prevent*, 635: — bi-hedde, *guarded*, pt. s. 102: *cared for, protected*, pp. 1048.
- bi-hemmen, inf. *hide with seemingly exterior*: see Note 672.
- bihinde, prep. *behind*, 594 etc.: — adv. 528, 666: — sb. *hinder parts*, apl. 596.
- bihōlde, inf. *behold, look upon*, 71; bi-hōlde, 1s. 1566; bi-hālde, inf. 1325; bihōld, pt. s. 30, 108.
- bi-hōte, pp. *promised*, 1745.
- bihouhte, J 199: see Note.
- bile, sb. *beak*, n. 79; a. 269, 1675.
- bi-lēaue, inf. *remain*, 1688.
- bilēck, see bi-lūþ.
- bi-lēdet, pl. *pursue, ill-treat*, 68: cp. O. E. *Misc.* pp. 83, 45.
- bi-legge, inf. *hide the true nature of, glose*, 672; bileist, 2s. 839: — *interpret*, bilegge, inf. 904.
- bilēue, inf. *keep silent*, 42: *remain*, 464.
- biliked, pp. *made pleasing*, 842.
- bi-lūþ, 3s. *locks up*, 1557; bilēck, pt. s. 1081.
- bi-neoðe, prep. *beneath*, 912.
- binimeþ, 3s. *takes away*, 941; bi-nume, pp. 1226.
- bi-rēued, pp. *bereft*, 120.
- bischopen, sb. *bishops*, dpl.

- 1761: dpl. -n, cp. *screwen*.
bi-schricheþ, pl. *screech at*, 67: see *schrichest*.
bi-sēhþ, 3s. *pursues*, *be-seeches*, 1439.
bisēmed, pp. *made seemly*, *plausible*, 842.
bi-sīde, adv. *beside*, 25.
bisne, adj. *purblind*, 97, 243.
bi-speke, opt. s. *may talk against*, 1561: — *promised*, pp. 1738.
bī-spel, sb. *parable*, *fable*, 127: cp. Note 148.
bi-stal, pt. s. *stole away*, J 1432.
bi-stant, 3s. *stands around*, *takes trouble for*, 1438.
bistarte, 3s. *leaps*, *tumbles about*, J 1438: see Note.
bi-swīke, inf. *betray*, *deceive*, 158; opt. pl. 930.
bit, see *bidde*.
bitelle, inf. *justify*, 263.
bi-benche, inf. *bethink*, 471, 828; opt. s. 871;
bi-bohte, **bi-bozte**, pt. s. 199, 704, 939: — *think upon*, *ponder*, **bi-benchest**, 2s. 1505; **bipenchþ**, 3s. 1509.
bitide, opt. s. *may happen*, 52; **bitidde**, pt. s. 1107.
bi-tiȝt, pp. *covered*, *clothed*: see Note 1013.
bitoȝe, pp. *employed*, 702.
bi-tuxen, **bitwēone**, prep. *between*, 1379, 1747.
bi-uore, prep. *before*, 776: — adv. 1235.
bi-wēpe, inf. *weep over*, *for*, 980; **bi-wēpen**, opt. pl. 974.
bi-werest, 2s. *protectest*, 1126, 1517.
bi-wrō, inf. *conceal*, 673.
blēd, sb. *blade*, *blossom*, n. 1042.
blenche, inf. *avoid by shrinking*, 170, 1231.
blenches, sb. *tricks*, apl. 378.
blēo, **blō**, sb. *complexion*, *appearance*, d. 1547, 152, 441.
blēs, see Note 748.
blēte, adj. *wretched*, hence *bare*, *exposed*, 616: — as sb. *bare*, 57.
blind, adj. *blind*, 243, 1237.
blis, sb. *joy*, *joyousness*, n. 1280; **blisse**, n. 420, 422, 728 etc.; a. 433, 710, 1103; d. 717.
blisse, opt. s. *rejoice*, *be*

- glad*, 478; blisseþ hit, 3s. 435.
 bliþe, adj. *blithe*, *joyful*, 418, 992-94; comp. bliþur, 1108.
 blō, see blēo.
 blōd, sb. *blood*, n. 1127; a. 945 etc.; blōde, d. 1350.
 blostme, blosme, sb. *blossoms*, npl. 437, 16.
 blōwe, inf. *blow*, *blossom*, 1133, 1201; pp. adj. 1636; iblōwe, pp. 618.
 bō, see bēon.
 bō, num. *both*, n. 990; d. J 381.
 bōc, sb. *book*, a. 1325. bōkes, g. 1208; bōke, dpl. 350.
 bōde, see Note 530.
 bōdest, 2s. *announce*, *prophesy*, 1152, 1157, 1160. bōdes 1155 (see Note 81); bōdeþ, 3s. 1170.
 bodī, sb. *body*, n. 73.
 bōze, sb. *bough*, d. 15 dpl. 616, 816; bōwe, d 125, 1244; bōs, apl. 242
 bōke, see bōc.
 bōld, adj. *bold*, *strong*, 317 405; bōlde, af. 410. bēlde, apl. 1715.
 bōldeliþe, adv. *boldly*, 401
 bōn, see bēon.
 bōn, sb. *bones*, apl. 1120.
 bōnde-man, sb. *holder under tenure of bondage*, n. 1577.
 bōr, sb. *beer*, a. 1011.
 bōrde, sb. *table*, d. 479, 1492, 1579.
 bōre, sb. *boar*, d. 408, 1021.
 bōs, see bōze : Note 242.
 bōte, sb. *alleviation*, *help*, n. 688, 700; g. (with bidde) 858.
 bote, prep. *except*, 884.
 bōþ, see bēon.
 bōþe, num. *both*, n. 1681, d. C 381.
 bōþe, conj. cor. with and, an, *both*, 50, 225 etc.
 bōwe, see bōze.
 bredde, pt. s. *bred*, 101.
 brēde, sb. *roast flesh*, a. 1630.
 brēde, sb. *breadth*, d. 174.
 brede, see Note 965.
 breist, see Note 1633.
 breke, inf. *break*, 1080, 1334, 1693; i-broke, pp. J 1558.
 brēme, adj. *spirited*, *passionate*, 202, 500.
 brēþ, sb. *breath*, n. 1454, 1461; a. 948.

- brid, *young bird*, a. 124
(see Note); briddes, npl.
654, 1102; apl. 106,
1628; dpl. 107, 626;
bridde, dpl. 111, 644,
apl. 123 (see Note 767).
brīdél, sb. *bridle*, n. 1028.
brīzt, adj. *bright, clear*,
623; brizte, 240, 250,
1681: comp. brižter, 152:
—adv. brihte, 1245,
1656.
bringe, inf. *bring*, 710
etc.; 1s. 433; bringh,
bring, 3s. 1534, 1447;
brozte, brohte, pt. s. 107,
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545, 1559.
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brōde, d. 93, 130, 1386.
brōde, adj. *broad*, 75.
brozte, brohte, see bringe.
broiden, pp. *braided, woven*,
645.
brōst, sb. *breasts*, apl. 978.
brōper, sb. *brother*, n. 118.
brūne, sb. *burning*, a. 1155.
būc, sb. *belly, body*, n. 1132,
1494.
būdel, sb. *herald, beadle*,
n. 1169.
būggen, būgge, inf. *buy*,
procure, 1368, 1506.
būr, sb. *dwelling, bower*,
n. 958; būres, g. 652;
apl. 1045; būre, d. 937–
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burz, sb. *city*, a. 766.
būrne, sb. *brook, burn*, d.
918.
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ne, *except*, 1290, 1622;
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948, 1290, 1461, 1622,
1760, but 799: —adv.
but, only, 756.
būte, conj. *but*, 833: *un-*
less, 1289, 1301: *except*
that, 558, 560, 566: *ex-*
cept, 574, 663, 709, 1322,
1452.
buue, prep. *above*, 1346,
1494: —adv. *above*,
208, *high*, 1052.
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 i-wrne, pp. *run, passed*,
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pens, J 1256: see Note; *kün-rēde*, sb. *kindred*, d. 1677.

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kare, sb. *anxiety*, a. 1590.

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kuke-wēld, sb. *cuckold*, a. 1544.

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kün, sb. *kin*, n. 714; *künne*, d. 1099, 1674: *kinds*, gpl. 888, 1396.

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ā, interj. *lo!* 1543.

acche, inf. *seize*, 1057.

āþe, adv. *low*, 1456; *lōþe* 1052.

aþe, sb. *law, custom*, n. 969; d. 1037; a. 1061.

lah-fulnesse, sb. *lawfulness*, d. 1741.

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lauedī, sb. *lady*, n. 959; a. 1569, *lefdī* 1051; *laue-dīes*, npl. 1338 etc.

- lāuerd, sb. *lord, lover*, n.
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- lēches, sb. *actions, features*,
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- legge, inf. *lay, place*, 1224;
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- lengþe, sb. *length*, d.
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- lēnst, 2s. *lendest, gi-vest*,
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- lēof, adj. *dear, desirable*,
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 231, 281 etc.; lōue, af.
 968; lōve, apl. 1035.
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- lēornī, 1s. *learn*, 1212;
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- lēre, inf. *teach*, 1017, 1050;
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- lēse, adj. *loose, disgrace-*
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- lēte, 1s. *let, permit*, 1457;
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 — *caused*, lēt, pt. s. 1093—
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- lēte, sb. *cry, noise; be-*
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 Icel. *lát*.
- lēten, inf. *hinder, impede*,
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- lēteþ, pl. *value, esteem*,
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- libbe, inf. *live*, 1192; opt.
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 1078; *līues*, adv. g. *in* *lītle*, adj. *little*, 1776: see
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 lūre, sb. *loss*, d. a. 1153.
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 ūre, pron. poss. *our*, 118, 420: *ours* (pred.), 958, 650.
 ūrne, inf. *run*, 638; ūrneþ, pl. 375: O. E. *iernan, yrnan*.
 us, pron. *us*, dpl. 188, 418 etc.; apl. 187, 201.
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 ūt-halue, sb. adv. d., *on the outer part*: see Note 110.
 ūt-hēste, sb. *hue and cry*, a. 1698, ūtēst, 1683.
 ūt-lēte, sb. *'outlet; a place for putting out to sea. Icel. útlát,' Sk., d. 1754. Cp. O. E. ūt-latan*.
 ūt-schūte, sb. *outshootings*

[*beyond the bounds of moral law*], *excesses*, npl. 1468. O. E. *ūt-scyte*.
 üuel, adj. *evil, ill*, 1051;
 vüel, 769; üuele, 1376;
 vüele, 1171, 1172 etc.:
 —adv. *vüele, in evil manner, badly*, 63, üuele, 1206.

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 vair, see fair.
 uale, see fele.
 uare, see fare.
 vare, sb. *course, faring*, n. J 296: see Note.
 uastre, see faste.
 uecche, inf. *fetch, obtain*, 1504.
 vel, uel, see wel.
 uel, see felle.
 uele, see fele.
 venne, sb. *fen*, d. 962, uenne, 832.
 ueole, see fele.
 uērde, see fērde.
 uēre, C 1306, see wēre.
 vich, see euch.
 vicst, viȝte, see fiȝte.
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 uise, see wīs.
 uisest, see wīsī.
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uō, sb. *foe*, d. 403.
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 uōlde, sb. *fold*, d. 696 (see Note): *folds, crevices*, dpl. 602: — *manie vōlde, in manifold ways*, 72.
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 uor-crempeþ, pl. *twist convulsively*, 510.
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uor-lēteþ, see for-lēten.

uor-lōst, see for-lēose.

vorre, adv. *afar, far off*,
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uorþ, see forþ.

vor-þī, see vor.

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ing, a. 1590.

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- weole, sb. *weal*, *abund-*
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- wēpen, inf. *weep*, 987;
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- wepne, sb. *weapons*, npl.
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- were, sb. *man*, *husband*, n.
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- west, 3s. *waxes*, *increases*,
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- weþer, conj. *whether*, 824,
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wike, sb. *offices*, *services*, npl. 605; apl. 603; gpl. 805.
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- wisse, 1s. 927; uīsest, 2s. 973.
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